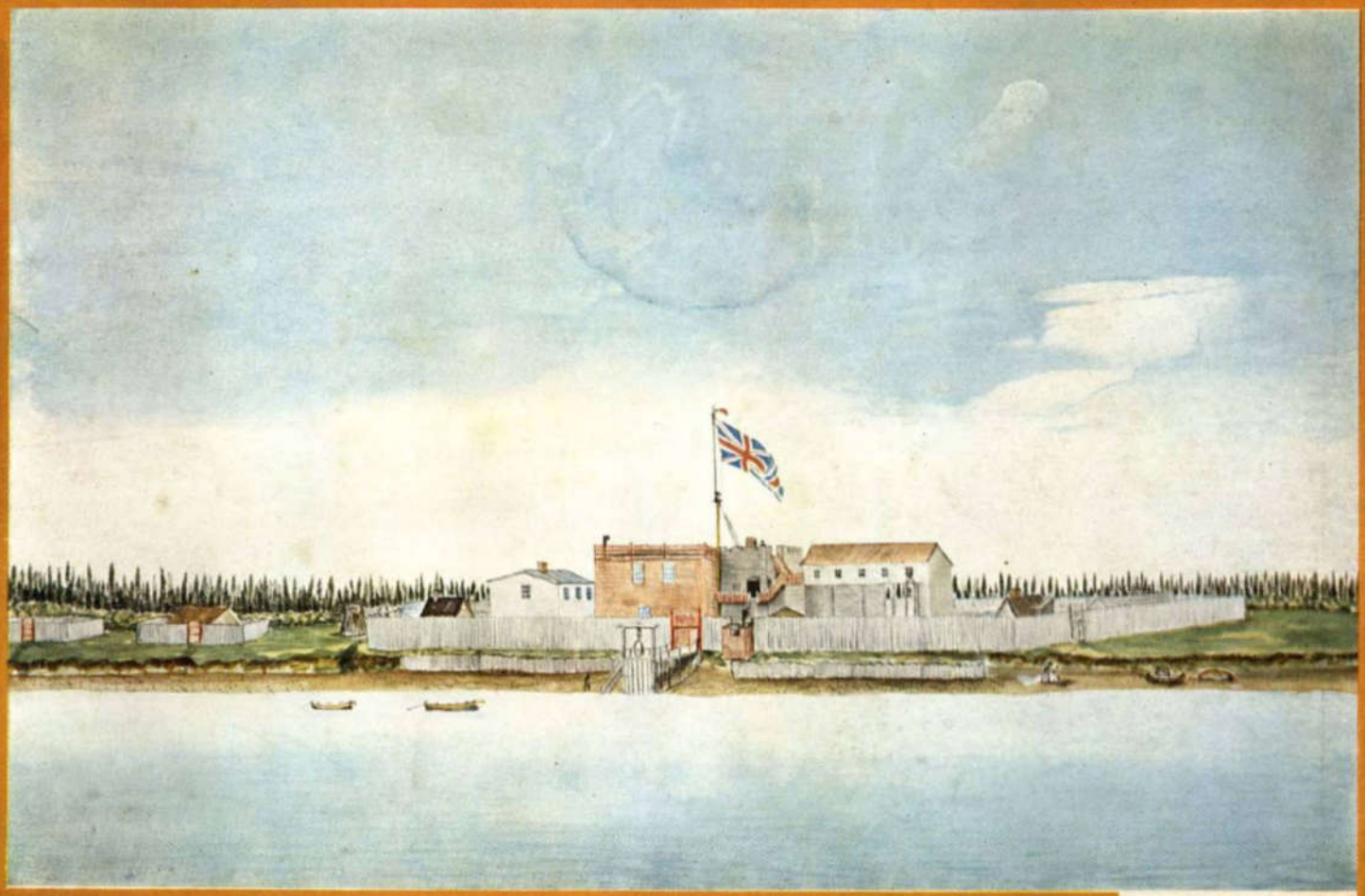
The Beaver

SUMMER 1967



By Wm Richards

A View of Eastmain Factory.

"This person . . . was bold, enterprising, and voluntarily offered his service to . . . explore the country."

Two hundred years ago this description was given of Anthony Henday, who made a year-long, 2000 mile expedition from York Factory to the inland country — the first European to see the Northern Rockies and meet the Blackfoot Indians on their hunting grounds.

Great men — past and present — build a great Company.

Hudson's Bay Company

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670

The Beaver

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CONTENTS

4 **JAMES BAY ARTIST, WILLIAM RICHARDS**
Alice M. Johnson

11 **KNIGHTS OF THE WATERWAYS**
Grace Lee Nute

18 **FORT DEFIANCE**
Jack Fry

22 **TRANSFERRAL OF A BUNDLE**
Ellen Watt

26 **CENTENNIAL CANOE PAGEANT**

32 **THE ABITIBI FUR BRIGADE**
Arthur Heming

40 **"A TERRITORY OF LITTLE VALUE"**
C. Ian Jackson

46 **ARGILLITE**
Robert W. Hobson

52 **IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING**
Richard J. D. Brunt

54 **BLOW GUN**
Jerome J. Knap

55 **NORTHERN BOOKS**

COVER: Eastmain Factory, a water-colour by William Richards who was there 1807-8.
H B C ARCHIVES

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James Bay Artist William Richards

BY ALICE M. JOHNSON

The archivist of the Hudson's Bay Company has brought to light the story of an early native-born artist and his family background. The water-colours reproduced are in the Company archives.

WILLIAM RICHARDS, whose pictures are reproduced on these pages, has only recently been identified although three of his water-colours have been in the Hudson's Bay Company's London collection for a number of years. The fourth, that entitled 'A man & his Wife returning with a load of Partridges from their Tent', was bought from a London bookseller in 1962 at a price which would have startled the artist could he but have known about it. There is still not a great deal known about Richards, mainly because his comparatively short life, spent entirely in the James Bay area, was quite an ordinary one for that time and, except for one lapse which could have been due to an on-coming and fatal illness, he was a good and well-behaved workman. Usually only the briefest of references are found to orderly men in the Company's records: trouble-makers inevitably get longer ones.

The identification of Richards began with the remark found in the entry of 9 July 1811 in the Moose Factory journal kept by the Chief, John Thomas. It reads:

> . . . about 6 O'Clock this Evening Wm. Richards (who has been a long time in a decline) breathed his last, he was when in health a useful Servant and remarkable for his genius in drawing.

and with this tribute as a starting-point it has been possible to discover some facts about the artist's life and to find some information about his father and grandfather who were both interesting though apparently less reliable characters.

Richards is not an uncommon surname in the Company's records for the eighteenth century and it is only in exceptional circumstances that relationships one with another can be established. So, for that reason, it cannot be said whether or not the artist's grandfather was the first of his forebears to enter into the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, or if he was related in any way to Joseph Richards who was promoted to the command of the Company's ship *Sea Horse* in February 1764. What is certain, however, is that William Richards's grandfather, also named William, first went to Albany Factory in 1757 as a surgeon. Like so many other Company employees of that profession he also took a great interest in the trading side of life in Hudson Bay. In 1764, after seven years in the area still known as 'the Bottom of the Bay', William senior was recalled to England because the Committee were not willing to meet his request for an advance in wages. It was not that they were dissatisfied with him, but the peace following the Seven Years' War had released many more men on to the labour market and they could replace him by a man willing to take a lower salary.

The Company's ship brought William senior to London so he had the opportunity of meeting the Governor and Committee. Before leaving for South Wales he submitted proposals to them for the resettling of Henley House and, in the event of his recommendations being accepted, he requested to be appointed master and surgeon at this Albany River inland station. He then went to his home in the small but ancient town and port of Neath in Glamorganshire and there apparently spent the winter. His recommendations were accepted and he was given the appointment he had requested.

After serving four years from 1765 as master and surgeon at Henley House William senior asked for permission to return to England, his reason being apparently concerned with quarrels he had had with the Chief at

"A man & his Wife returning with a load of Partridges from their Tent". Water-colour, 14½"×10"

Albany. Richards was allowed to return to England in 1769. He left behind two sons, Thomas and John, the mother of whom was of Indian or part-Indian blood, but as he appears to have had hopes if not expectations of going back, he cannot be accused of abandoning them deliberately. In the winter of 1770 William senior applied for the position of Chief at Moose Factory, but he was turned down both on this occasion and in response to other applications made between 1771 and 1773. By 1783 he was living in Cardiff and from there he again unsuccessfully applied for work in that year, in 1787 and in 1792. He had, in fact, been blacklisted, apparently for having been suspected of smuggling furs into England in 1769, and it was only due to an oversight or carelessness in Hudson's Bay House that in 1794, some twenty-five years after his second return from James Bay, he was again engaged, this time as surgeon at Moose Factory. The provision William made out of his salary of £40 per annum for the maintenance of his wife Mary, left in Cardiff, was not sufficient, it seems, for her needs, and her letters of complaint (which have not survived) were apparently the means of bringing the error to the notice of the Committee. Copies of the secretary's replies to Mrs Richards do survive, however, and the one dated 9 February 1795 includes a tantalizing postscript reading, "Your Letter for the Boy should be here by the 15 of May at the furthest and if so it shall be forwarded". Who was "The Boy" in the Bay to whom she wanted to send a letter by one of the Company's ships? Another letter written to her ten days later included the remark, "I am sorry to add that your Husband has most grossly deceived the Committee as well as yourself". As might be expected, William Richards was summoned home in 1795.

It is not known if William senior had communicated with his family in James Bay during his long absence, but it seems unlikely that he had been in a position to contribute towards their support. That being the case the boys, Thomas and John, were presumably cared for by their mother's people and an eye kept on them by the charitable Chiefs at Albany Fort. How the news of William's return to James Bay in 1794 was received by Thomas and John (the latter by this time a father him-

self) and by their "old Mother" living at Moose is not known, but at any rate John and his father became on friendly terms.

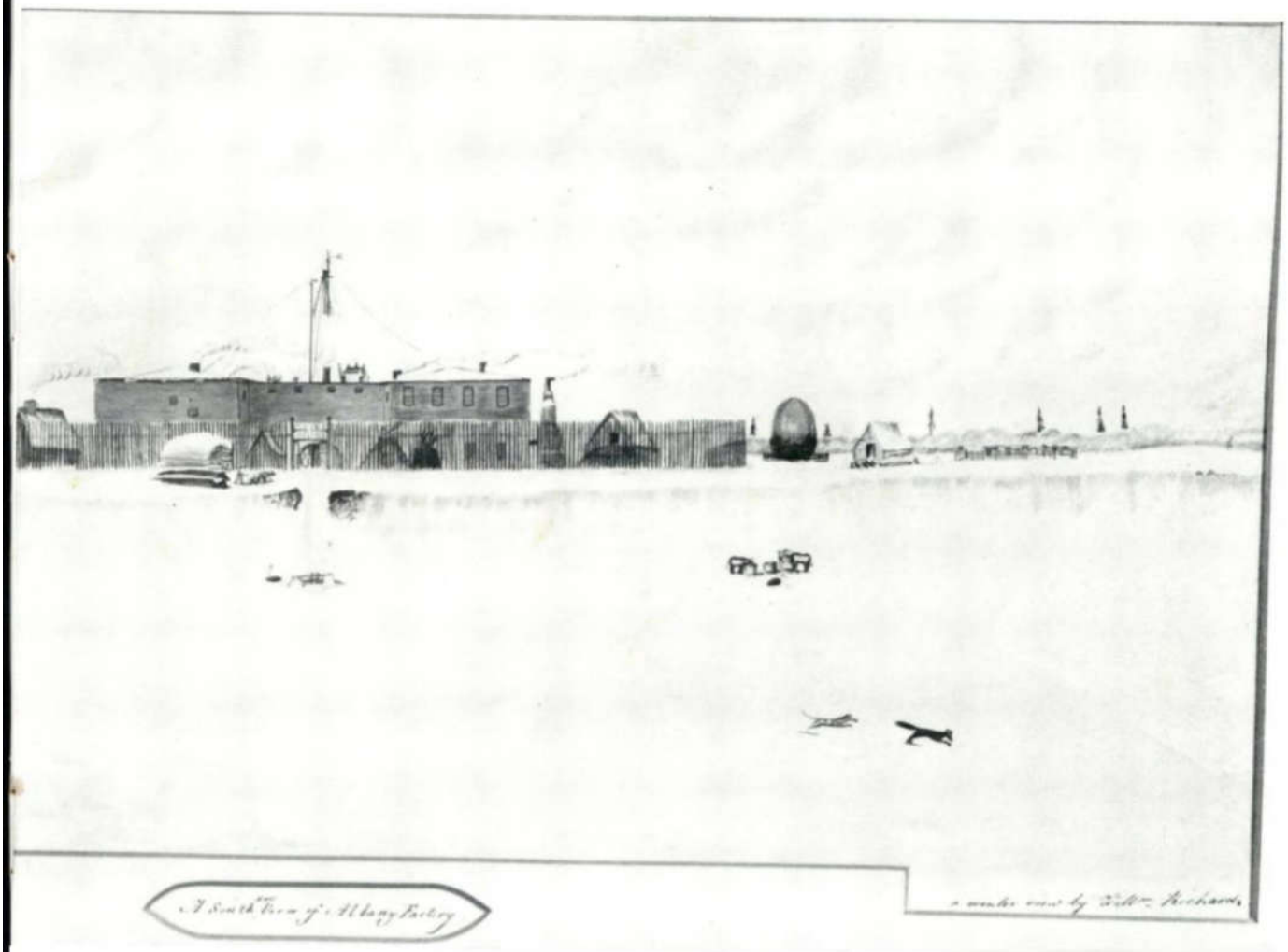
Although both the "young lads" Thomas and John had, by1783, repeatedly applied to the Chief at Albany for employment under the same terms as Englishmen, only the latter entered into a formal contract (to which he was able to sign his name) in that year. He agreed to serve as a labourer for five years at £6 per annum. Thomas's formal entry into the Company's employ was delayed until 1794 but thereafter he served regularly as a canoeman, etc., until his death in 1812.

John appears to have been employed for a number of years as interpreter at Gloucester House and it is highly probable that it was at this post that his son, William the artist, was born. By the time William the surgeon arrived at Moose in 1794 John was ranked as a trader in the Red River area receiving £18 per annum. According to character reports he was "beloved by the Indians" but at times "irregular". Just how irregular his conduct was is not clear, but one suspects that he was ambitious and anxious for quicker recognition of his usefulness to the Company which lay in his influence over the Indians. This influence was important because in the 1790s the Hudson's Bay Company had to meet strenuous competition from Montreal-based Canadian traders. John appears to have learnt to write more than just his name if it is accepted that the dictionary and music books which he ordered at his own expense from London in 1792 were for his personal use.

Surgeon William Richards had no choice but to obey the Committee's peremptory order to return to England in 1795. What is of particular interest is that John, with permission from their Honours, also sailed in the *Prince of Wales*. The winter of 1795-96 must have been full of entirely new experiences for him, spent as it was in a country feeling the effects of the war with France. And if he had not already learnt some Welsh from his father he would probably have found Neath a very strange place indeed. And how did Mrs Richards receive her husband's son?

John returned to Albany in the summer of 1796 and immediately on arrival set off inland with a party headed by Donald McKay supposedly bound for the Red River area. McKay, whose strange disposition and character earned him the name of "Mad McKay", got no farther than the neighbourhood of Osnaburgh House that year and, after a short absence spent at Albany, it was from Osnaburgh House on 16 June 1797 that John Richards, then "more turbulent than any other Indian" belonging to the place, deserted the Company's service. He not only deserted his employment but he left the area and

abandoned his family, no financial provision being made for them according to his account in the Officers' and Servants' Ledger. John found employment with the North West Company and during trading season 1798-99 opposed Peter Fidler of the Hudson's Bay Company who was then in charge of Cumberland House. In the summer of 1799 John was persuaded to leave the Nor'Westers and go as interpreter to Lac la Biche where Fidler was to build Greenwich House and attempt to open trade there with the Bungi Indians. As the only Company man working inland from York Factory able to speak their language, Mr Richards, as he was now politely called, was expected to play an important part at Greenwich House because his work was to attract these Indians away from the Nor'Westers. But it would not be easy because the Bungis (or Saulteaux) were greatly attached to the Canadians whom they followed into the North West from their own lands around Rainy Lake and the western end of Lake Superior. But that wily Nor'Wester,



Angus Shaw, "debauched" John Richards before he even reached Lac la Biche, and nothing more is known about him. It is unlikely that he ever saw his family in James Bay again.

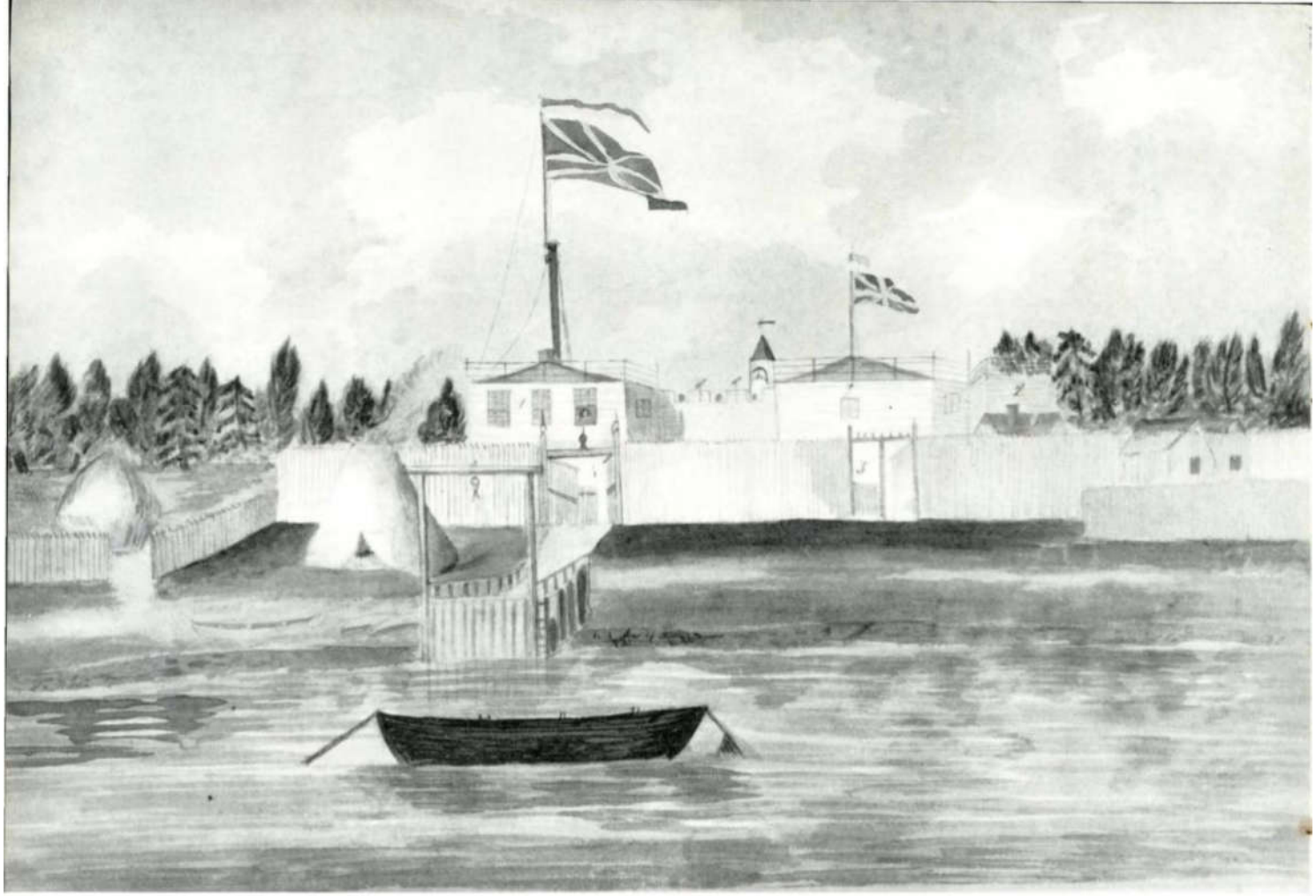
The size of this family is not known, nor are the names of John's mother and wife. This is not surprising because, after all, the obvious end to which the Company's records were kept was to discover annually how much could be distributed in dividends and to forecast future trade prospects. All the same, it has been possible to establish that William the surgeon was John's father and that he in turn was the father of the man who can, up to the present, claim to be the first artist born in the Company's territory of Rupert's Land which, in 1870, became part of the then young Dominion of Canada.

"Bill Richards", described by the Albany Chief, John Hodgson, as "a Son of John Richards who left the Service some time ago, and went to the Canadians", had grown into a stout, healthy lad and by November 1800 was

"A South-East View of Albany Factory, a winter view by Willm. Richards." Water-colour, 20½"×9½"

The tiny figures are executed with great delicacy by a man whose hands must have been calloused with hard work in the canoes and at coopering. In this animated scene he shows, near hayrick on left, an animal, and a man leading a team of horses drawing wood; figure on snowshoes, carrying gun, approaching the Fort; well for drawing water through the ice, in front of gate; two figures cutting wood, others hauling logs; horned cattle feeding from tubs below hayrick on right; mottled dog chasing a black fox.

The writing on this and the other pictures is believed to be that of John Thomas, Chief at Moose Factory.



"East View of Moose Factory."
Water-colour, 12" × 8¼"

This unnamed, unsigned water-colour was identified by comparison with a somewhat similar one, now in the collection of Glenbow Foundation, which had a detailed description on the back in the handwriting that appears on the H B C pictures, possibly that of John Thomas, Chief at Moose. The key to the numbered and other buildings reads: 1 Dwelling Flanker. 2 Warehouse Do. & North Flanker. 3 Principal Gateway. 4 Boatyard Do. The outhouses are the Shipwrights Workshop, Ship, Smith forge Kitchen, Brewhouse, & Cattlesheds.

more than fourteen years old. With at least two other boys of about the same age (Thomas, son of the Chief, and Jacob, son of the deceased carpenter, Mathew Truthwaite) he had been "Educated and Brought up in the Factory". This education had apparently been imparted by William Gaudy (or Goudie), a labourer, who had joined the Company in 1792 when about twenty-two years of age and had been unfortunate enough to lose a leg. His usefulness had therefore become limited and it was for this reason rather than his having any actual qualifications that Hodgson gave him the tasks of "learning the Boys and assisting the Taylor at times in Sewing".

On 17 November 1800 schooldays for Bill Richards and his two companions ended. After consulting their inclinations the Chief made provision for their futures by apprenticing them to the tradesmen of their choice. Thomas Hodgson was bound to the shipwright, Jacob Truthwaite to the house carpenter, and young Richards became the cooper's pupil.

The man who instructed young William into the mystery of his chosen trade seems to have been the Orkneyman James Inkster. No indentures, if indeed there

were ever any, have survived so the stipulated term is not known, but William's apprenticeship to what is nowadays a dying trade because of modern methods of bulk transport, canning and packing, lasted rather less than three years. This was probably sufficient time in which to learn how to meet the needs of the Bay-side factories and the inland posts. Kegs and runlets for spirits, and casks for the geese shot and salted at Albany during the spring and autumn migrations (to supplement the provisions sent out from England) would have been included in the work he was called upon to do.

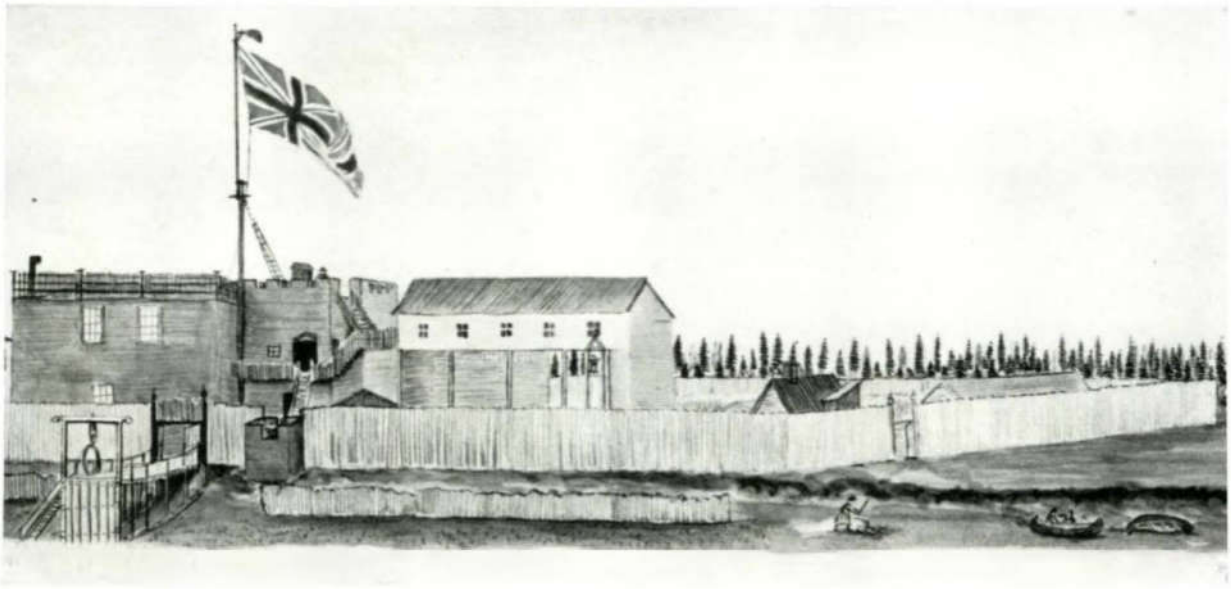
By 1803 William was ready to become a wage-earner and a regular employee of the Company. But instead of realizing or recognizing his obligation to remain at Albany he either accompanied or followed his uncle, Thomas Richards, to Moose Factory. Thomas, a "boat-steerer" on the Albany inland establishment, had obtained permission from John Hodgson to go to Moose to see his "old Mother", but once there refused to leave. Both Thomas and William applied for employment at Moose, not realizing that John Thomas, the Chief, could not give them contracts without first consulting John Hodgson at Albany and getting permission from the London Committee. John Thomas ought to have insisted that uncle and nephew return to Albany, and in normal times he would no doubt have done so, but times were not normal in James Bay in 1803. More men were returning to the Orkneys than were coming out as replacements and for this reason the Chiefs were having to rely increasingly on "Native Youths" such as William Richards, not only for manning the craft sent inland, but in helping to oppose the Company's Canadian competitors. Moreover, the problem of competition had become even more acute in the summer of 1803 because the North West Company had not only got a post operating on Hayes Island, but for the first time was about to make use of the Hudson Bay route. It seems worth mentioning here that the captain who brought the *Eddystone* safely through Hudson Strait down to Charlton Island, where John George McTavish established Fort St Andrews, was John Richards, son of the Captain Joseph Richards mentioned near the beginning of this article. After many years in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company Captain John Richards had been dismissed in 1801 for smuggling furs and had turned to the Nor'Westers for employment.

John Thomas, wisely in the circumstances, promised to put the applications of Thomas and William Richards before the proper authorities. This apparently gave satisfaction and there was no inclination on their part to join the Nor'Westers who would have found them very useful employees in an area where Canadians, as yet, had no great influence. So for about a year uncle and nephew seem to have been casually employed around Moose Factory. The required permission was eventually received and as from June 1804 William Richards was entered in the Company's books as a canoe-man and cooper for three years at £8 per annum. He proved a useful and active employee. He spent trading season 1804-5 at New Brunswick House on Micabanish (now Brunswick) Lake, thereby increasing his basic wage of £8 to £11. 9*s*. 4*d*. by getting a bounty of £1 for living inland and £2. 9*s*. 4*d*. as his share of the bonus allowed on the total number of skins traded at the post.

During the greater part of the next outfit (1805-6) he was mainly employed at Moose Factory, and he again earned additional money in the fall and spring by working in the canoes which carried letters between that depot and New Brunswick House and goods between the depot and the post at Kenogamissi. During part of trading season 1806-7 he was stationed at Kenogamissi then, after spending the early weeks of 1807 at Moose Factory, he went with Richard Good to oppose the Canadian traders at Abitibi.

William's usefulness was not only accepted but recognized in 1807 when, as he had requested, he received a new contract at the advanced wage of £20 per annum. The term was for three years and it appears that he was to be mainly employed at Moose Factory where, in season 1807-8, John Mannell was to be in charge during John Thomas's absence in England. Instead of making a trip inland with the transport canoes in the autumn of 1807 William made his first and only visit to Eastmain Factory, the Company's third depot on James Bay. This came about because the *Eastmain* schooner did not have a full complement of sailors. So when she sailed from Moose in the middle of October with a load of logs and girders William Richards and three other men were sent aboard to help during the voyage. The four auxiliaries were supposed to return to Moose by canoe and even set out to do so, but the onset of winter made the journey so dangerous that they went back to Eastmain. It was during his enforced stay there, that for undiscovered reasons, William became "refractory and mutinous as well as negligent". The accusation was made (but without giving details) by George Gladman, senior, who saw the last of William Richards and the other three unwilling guests on 7 January 1808 when, accompanied by two Eastmain men, they left "by land" for Moose with the winter packet of dispatches. They arrived at the Factory thirteen days later.

The last "trip money" (£1) which was credited to William Richards's account in the Company's books was earned in the spring of 1808 when he was a member of



"A View of Eastmain Factory." Water-colour, 20"×13"

Detail of the picture on cover, showing Eastmain as Richards may have seen it on his arrival there in October 1807 soon after which frost and snow were recorded. Men are chopping wood, working on a canoe, and one looks over the parapet beneath the flag.

the crew which took supplies from Moose to Kenogamissi. Both the Moose and the Kenogamissi post journals (like all others, usually so reticent about family matters) mentioned this time that he was accompanied by his wife.

As there were then no missions or clergy in James Bay there are consequently no parish registers in the accepted sense from which to establish exactly when William and Eleanor (as she was named in the Company's records at the time of his death) became man and wife. But there does survive at the Moose Factory Anglican Mission a "Register of Births, Christenings, Deaths and other occurrences" beginning in 1811 and this includes an undated entry by John Thomas stating that his daughter Eleanor (born at 'Old Brunswick House' on 22 November 1780) was "now married to William Richards of this Factory". In this "Register" Thomas also recorded the christening of their son William on 4 December 1808 and the birth of their son James on 17 March 1811.

During the last days of February and the first week of March 1809 William Richards was employed at Moose making runlets and kegs, but on the 13th he was taken ill and was off duty for about two weeks. He recovered a little, however, and by the 27th was "amusing" himself by "Casting Buttons for the Trading Coats". But the recovery was only temporary, and at the end of the outfit, in May 1809, John Thomas recognized that William was "consumptive & incapable of doing any thing". William's condition had, of course, to be reported to the Committee in England, but although he lingered and did no more work his account was fortunately credited with wages until 9 July 1811, the day of his death. Two days later he was buried in Moose Factory graveyard.

When did William Richards begin to sketch? Seemingly in or before 1805, the year in which he had his first wages standing to his credit in the Company's books. Some of that money went into the tills of the London shopkeepers who fulfilled his orders for articles of clothing (including a fine hat "22 in. round the crown") and for miscellaneous items such as needles and pen-knives. What is of special interest is that he ordered a half-quire of drawing paper and a box of colours, but it is not clear from the records if these two items were omitted in error by the Company's secretary, or if (more unlikely) they were sent free of charge by the ship which sailed to Moose in 1806.

Other questions remain to be answered apart from those already raised or hinted at. Who, if anyone, taught William Richards to draw? Did he leave any other examples of his work and, if so, have any survived the hazards of time besides the four in the Company's possession and another "East View of Moose Factory" in the Glenbow Foundation collection? Also, there is the temptation to speculate. Had he lived longer could he have developed his talent? Could he have painted pictures of Indians and more of the outdoor scenes with which he was familiar all his life? If so, would such pictures have equalled those of Peter Rindisbacher who did not come from his native Switzerland to the Red River Settlement until a decade after William's death? ◆

Knights of the Waterways

BY GRACE LEE NUTE

WHEN THE DOMINION was formed, voyageurs were still remembered as important contributors to the life and economy of the continent, though their heyday as a class had already passed. For two centuries and more they had paddled their canoes from Quebec, Montreal, and Three Rivers into what they called *le pays d'en haut*, singing as they went their incomparable ballads and other *chansons*, laughing down whitewater for the sheer delight of its danger and exhilaration, cracking their whips over the backs of their sled dogs, and boasting of their canoes, dogs, and ability to carry great portage burdens. What colour and romance the century since then has lost with the departure of those vivacious characters from the national scene. Practically forgotten until recently, they are now being accorded once more their meed of glory. History's memory is long, even though individual man's is short.

Without voyageurs the fur trade could hardly have been carried on, as it was, over the vast expanse of woods and waters between the Atlantic and Pacific. Besides being skilful canoeists and hardy burden-bearers, voyageurs were patient and humble servants of the great fur-trading companies—French, British, Canadian, and American. They have left many legacies, prominent among which are their songs and the names they gave to physical features clear across the continent. "From sea unto sea" was no idle boast in the lives of these French Canadians, and occasionally Indians and part-Indians.

We have records of many of them from the middle of the seventeenth century. Radisson in his reminiscences of travel on Lake Superior mentions the "comers and goers," a common synonym for "voyageurs". It was a descriptive term, for these men came and went year by year between the hamlets on the lower St Lawrence and the trading posts on the Great Lakes and beyond. Another synonym was "engagés," which had reference to the contracts, or *engagements*, which voyageurs signed with their employers when they entered service for a "voyage" the ensuing spring.

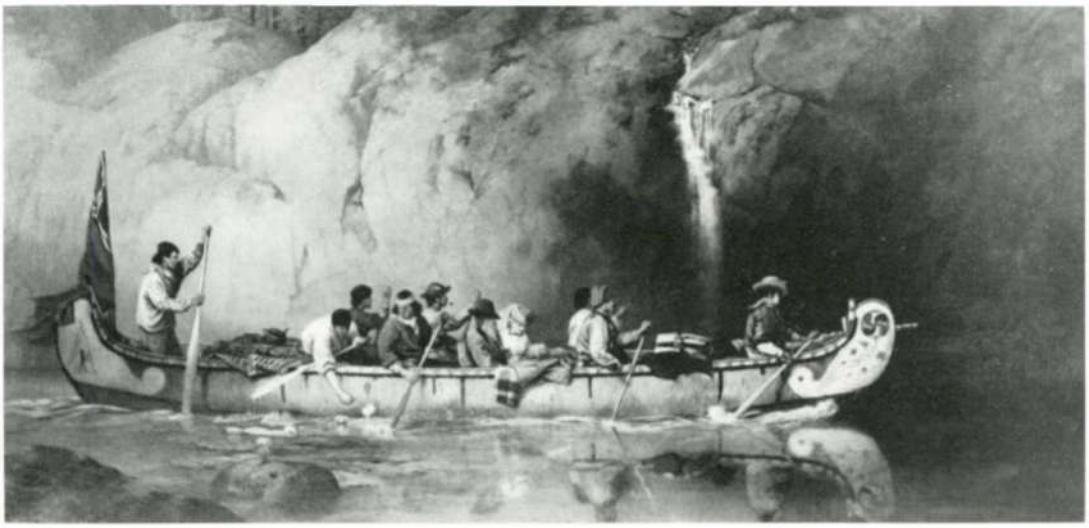
Take notice of that word "voyage". Who today would speak of a voyage from Montreal to Winnipeg, for instance? But that is exactly what it was during fur-trading days. Waterways were the only feasible way to reach the interior until roads and railroads were built. In the meantime birchbark canoes and dogsleds were the vehicle by which the great fur-trade of the northern part of the continent was carried on—canoes when the water was open, dogsleds when the water was frozen. Is it any wonder that the men who left Montreal in canoes every May on "voyages" into the hinterland became known as voyageurs? Yet the word in French means commonly only "travellers".

So voyageurs came into being, got their class name, and became the foundation for the greatest industry of the day, the fur trade. There were hundreds of them at the peak of prosperity of that trade, say in the year 1790. They were divided into two great classes. The "pork-eaters" paddled the big Montreal canoes up to the inland headquarters (Grand Portage until about 1801, Fort William thereafter) and returned to Montreal the same season. These novices were the butt of many a joke of the *hivernants*, the winterers or experienced men, who had been beyond the height of land west of Lake Superior, where water in lakes and streams ran toward Hudson Bay or the Arctic Ocean. There were still innumerable portages to face, but at least for many miles the paddlers did not have to work against the current as hitherto on the Ottawa, the Mattawa, and the Pigeon rivers.

These names indicate their route outward from Montreal: up the Ottawas to the Mattawa; up that

A voyageur of the 1860s, sketched by Frances Hopkins.

Professor of history and author of many books, Dr Nute is the leading authority on the voyageurs.



A typical bark canoe, decorated at bow and stern, manned by eight voyageurs and carrying two passengers. From an oil painting by Mrs Hopkins.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES

stream to Lake Nipissing; down French River into Georgian Bay of Lake Huron; across the head of that lake to Sault Ste Marie; and along the north shore of Lake Superior to inland headquarters. From there their route followed in general the present boundary between Canada and the United States as far as Lake of the Woods. Parenthetically let it be said that *is* the boundary just because the voyageurs made it their highway during the fur-trade era, and the negotiators of the treaty were definitely influenced by that fact. It was to preserve the use of the commercial route for both countries that the line was chosen.

As a rule, fur traders were not an articulate class, and their diaries, letters, and reports seldom generalize about their lives, or their voyageurs, who paddled their canoes, did the menial work at their forts (trading posts), and drove their dog teams in winter. Clerks (*commis*) and traders (*bourgeois*) became so accustomed to voyageurs that they took them for granted and referred to them very casually, knowing that their readers (every trader was required to send his diary, letters, and reports to the home office) would understand all terms and allusions. There was little point in explanations or descriptions of voyageurs or their lives to men who themselves in most instances had lived in trading posts at some time.

Not so the casual traveller journeying for the first time with voyageurs. To him, or once in a while to her, the the whole experience was so novel as to occasion rather full descriptions of voyageurs, their dress, canoes, language, customs, speech, and other facets of an unusual kind of life. It is the records of three such travellers which form the basis of this article.

One of them was a very perspicacious, well educated scientist. In 1823 he represented the United States in the survey of the common border between British North America and his country, then in active dispute because of ambiguous language in the treaty ending the War of the Revolution. This man, Major Joseph Delafield, kept extensive diaries and other records as he travelled with voyageurs through the Great Lakes and as far west as Lake of the Woods.

As he left Sault Ste Marie and began coasting the north shore of Lake Superior, he commented in his diary: "The more I see of the Canadian French, their mode of life, and connection with the Indians, the more I feel assured that without this very race of men, the fur trade of the North could not be carried on. They are more hardy than the Indian, are far more capable in the canoe, and in Winter will soon break down the Indian if travelling on snow shoes or with trains. Trains are little sleighs made of a single piece of thin flat wood, bent up at one end in a curl [*i.e.*, a toboggan]."

Of the appetites of voyageurs this same traveller reports, after receiving a fish from an Indian, "The five Canadians devour the whole of the 30 lb. trout except two or three [pieces?] & afterwards cook their corn." Between Mackinac near Sault Ste Marie and inland headquarters voyageurs depended upon lyed corn for their food; it was boiled in salted water over a campfire until a small stick would ride upright in the gruel-like concoction, to which a small amount of grease [*lard* in French] had been added. This last touch, occasioned their name, *mangeurs de lard*, or pork-eaters. One can hardly blame Delafield's men for gorging on the trout!

On the first part of the trip from Montreal dried peas had been the main food and once they reached the west, pemmican, the dried meat and fat prepared by the Indians, would be the principal article of diet.

"They are, with few exceptions, prodigious gluttons, eating like Indians, and never satisfied with anything, at the same time the most careless & probably the most happy people, "continues Delafield. "They will work the whole day without eating, and eat and sing the whole night without sleeping: are the best of canoe-men & the

worst to be managed without severity of any people I have had to deal with."

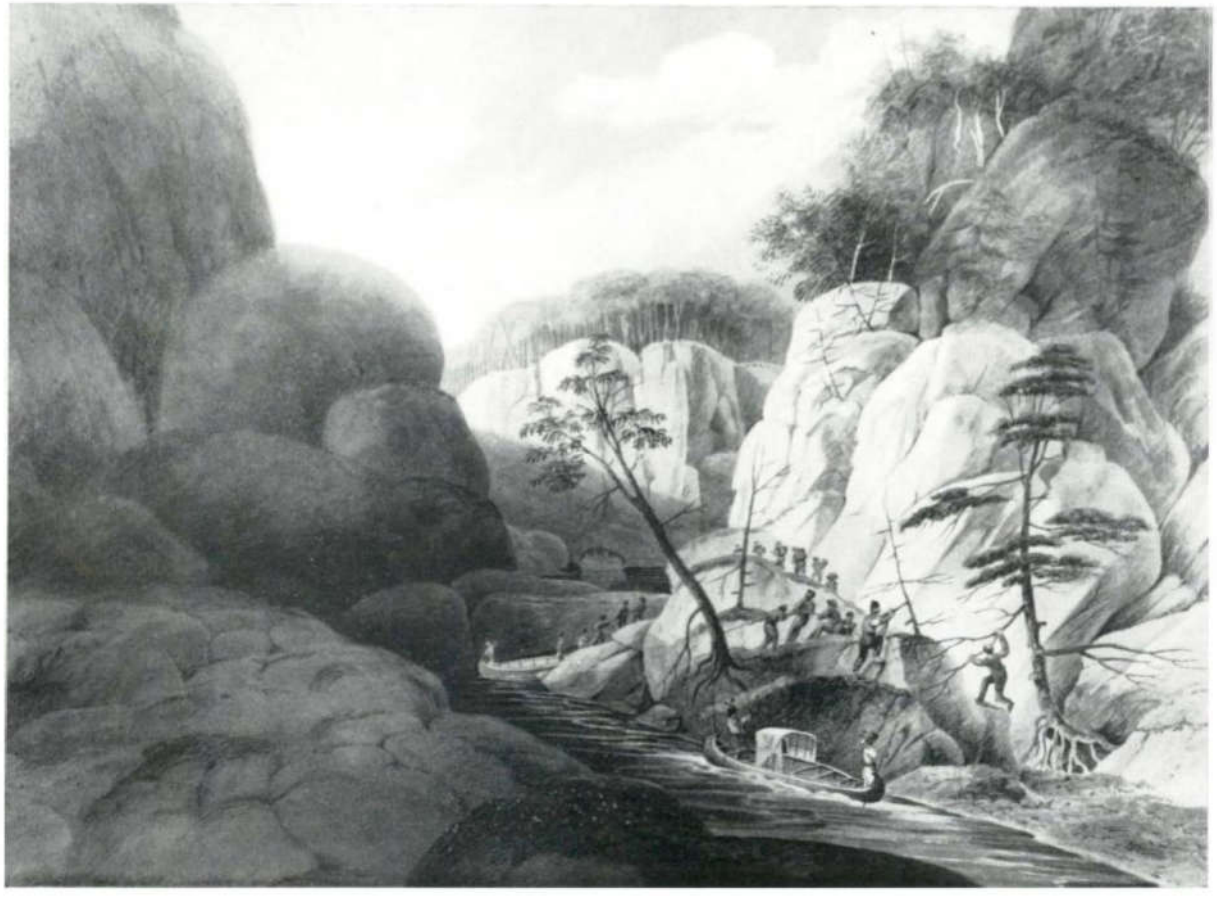
Delafield had with him as guide an old *hivernant* named Brisbois, who had been for nine years in the country between Lake Superior and James Bay. Just after passing the Pic River on the northeast shore of Lake Superior, Delafield wrote in his diary: "The importance of an experienced guide was strongly verified this evening. I had a twelve mile traverse [a dangerous stretch of open water far from shore] to make which led to a point of high rocks, that seemed to forbid approach, and the sun was little more than an hour high. Too early to stop & too late to proceed without knowing that I could encamp. I referred to my old guide, who said, 'Yes sir, by that point is a very good camp.' When I reached it after sunset, we turned a rocky point nearer than the precipice we had steered for & conducted the canoe to a little beach in a deep basin just large enough to contain us, where we were so entirely screened that the canoe was anchored by boughs of trees without unlading in perfect safety for the night."

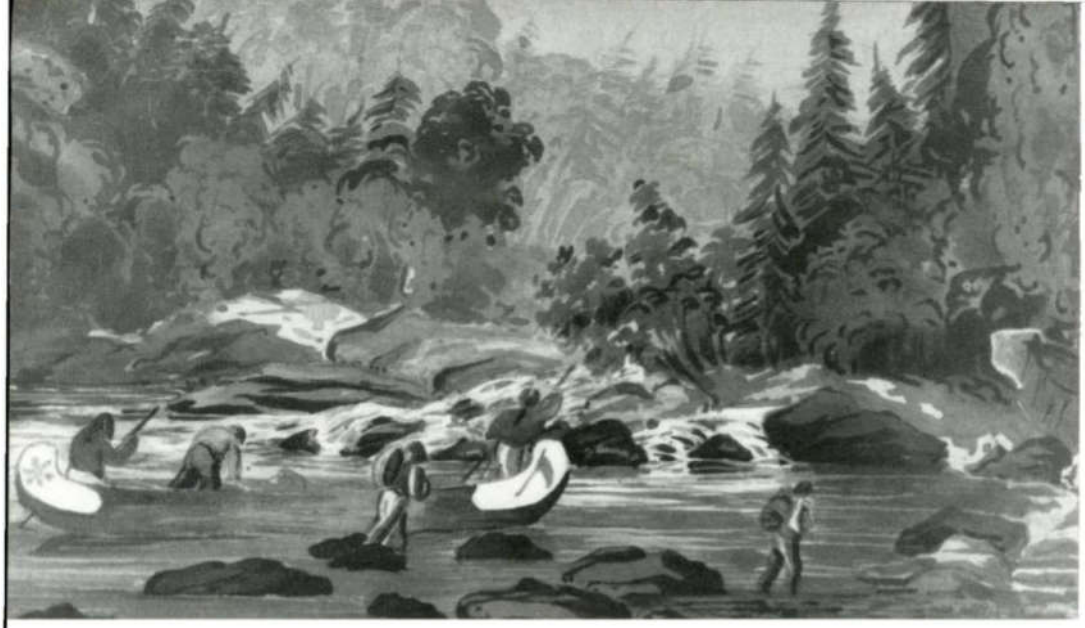
Amusing and interesting sidelights on the voyageurs appear in Delafield's diary. For instance: "The men see a mink on the rocks. They call it by a squeaking noise & the mink jumps into the water and swims toward the canoe 'til it comes so near as to discern us, when it flies for safety. In the same way they call the large gulls around them, sailing in the air 40 or 50 yards distance; and also the loon is disposed to comply with call of yole, yole, yole, but the rapid & clumsy bird cannot turn, much to the amusement of the men. They have in this manner calls for most animals, that the hunters practice to decoy them."

Delafield also tells of the credulity of the men. "There are many fables still repeated to the traveller by the Canadian voyageurs concerning the first passage of the French Jesuits thro' these lakes. The most earnestly repeated one was their tradition of large sums of money being buried by them upon Isle Royal that never could be found. The others related to the murder of the Priests [by Indians] at certain spots pointed out."

When he reached Fort William, Delafield had this to say of the former importance of that post, by 1823 in decay: "The field above [the fort] was always occupied by the North Men, or people who wintered in the Indian Country, and the plain below by the Pork Eaters, or people who came from Montreal in the Spring to take down packs & returned in the Summer. In former times, Mr. Stewart [in charge of the fort] tells me (in 1818) he had 800 North Men encamped here, and on such occasions

Tracking canoes on the French River at a décharge, where the cargo is portaged, sketched in the first part of the nineteenth century by Major J. E. Woolford. TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARIES





Preparing to make a portage, from a painting by H. J. Warre; the voyageurs unload their canoe in the rocky shallows.

D.C. ARCHIVES

there was always a constant riot in the camps, there being a sort of warfare existing" between the two rival sets of men.

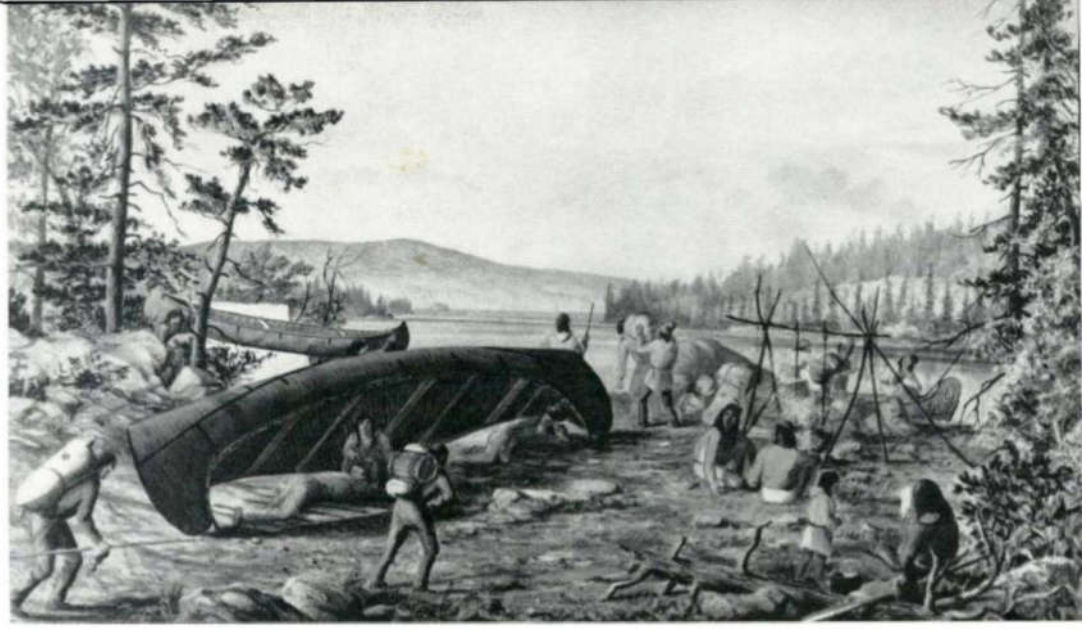
Here, like all who journeyed beyond Lake Superior, Major Delafield changed canoes—his great lake vessel with oar locks and oars as well as paddles—for a North canoe of smaller dimensions, "My Mackinac canoe being pronounced too heavy, as no two men could carry her, & the portages only admitting of such an arrangement. . . . The men do not like the canoe now purchased but it seems that they can state no objections, except that it had been for five years in the canoe house and no one had chosen it. . . . It is the custom with the Canadians always to be dissatisfied. . . . It is rare to find a bad tempered man amongst the voyageurs. They are careless of all things except their money, and in all respects very like our seamen, with the gay and singing faculties always in use."

Despite the men's objections the canoe was made ready for the voyage along the border lakes and streams to Lake of the Woods: "The men busy preparing the gum for the canoe. It is boiled over a slow fire the better part of a day & then burnt down until it becomes of purple consistency, when it is permitted to cool, & is of a black color and hard enough to crack upon bending the bark." Every night at the camping spot a birchbark canoe was turned over and its bottom and side-stitching of wattape (tree-root fibre) carefully examined. If repairs were needed, the spruce or pine gum was applied with the aid of a torch.

The singing faculties that Delafield mentions were put to good use the next morning. "At day break, Mr. Stewart of the fort comes to my Marquee to take leave, being ready to depart on his voyage to Hudson's Bay. Shortly after a salute is fired on his departure, of three guns. The first gun was the signal for the chaunt of the Canadians, and straining their pipes and their nerves to the utmost he soon passed my camp, ascending the river to take the New Road [via the Kaministikwia River] . . . intending to proceed to Lake Winnipeg & thence to Hudson's Bay."

At Grand Portage of the Old Road, forty or so miles southwest of Fort William, Delafield had his first experience with voyageur portaging. So he describes this, to him novel occurrence, in such detail that it is one of the best accounts available of this part of voyaging: "My establishment requires three trips for baggage and one for the canoe. The mode of carrying is by a portage collar, so called, which is a long leather strap with a broad band in the center to place on the forehead. The load is tied by the ends of it, the band placed on the forehead, & by stooping the man throws the one piece tied into the hollow of his back, his hands then being at liberty, he throws another piece on top of it which fills up the load to the back of his head. Bending forward, he takes it over his posé [voyageur measure of distances on portages] on a slow trot, a very fast walk with bended knees. The two pieces are carried with more ease than one, on account of the direction of the weight upon the body, and two sacks of corn (which is three bushels), or a keg of pork (96 lbs.) & a sack or two kegs, is the common load. My American of the party was very awkward at first, but soon carried light loads with ease, and it soon appeared that in no other manner, so great a weight could be carried on the portages as by the collar." This form of "collar" or carrying strap, adopted from the Indians, became known across Canada as a tumpline.

Though I had read scores of accounts of voyageurs and their travels, it was only when I read Delafield's diaries that I discovered what the voyageurs called the boards or ribs of a canoe. He tells of a custom that appeared at the height of land, where usually diaries relate only the so-called "baptism" ceremony, which made a pork-eater into a North man. It was a variant of the Neptune



The end of a portage and a brief rest as the packs, carried by tumpline (or portage collar) are brought in; painted by William Armstrong.

COVERDALE COLLN, CANADA STEAMSHIP LINES

ceremony when crossing a tropic and consisted of being sprinkled with water on a pine bough and making certain promises, such as never allowing another pork-eater to pass the same spot without undergoing the same ritual. Delafield, however, mentions another performance: "At the W. end of this portage, it is usual to prepare the canoe for the descent of rapids, the other side of Height of Land. This refitting consists in driving the boards or ribs of the canoe, called by the Canadians verons, tight, so that they have a uniform and close bearing upon the bottom or bark. The operation takes two or three hours. The improvement of the canoe is manifest both in firmness and form."

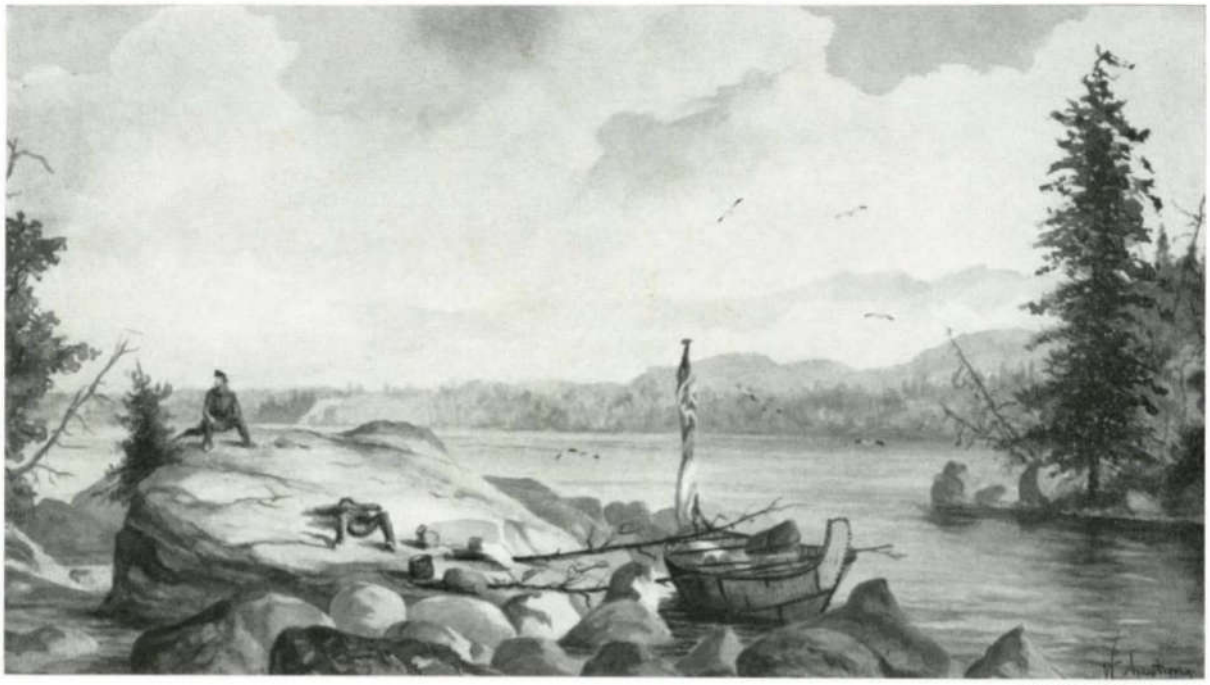
Here and there in his diaries Delafield mentions, rather casually, the dangers of this kind of life. Finally, as the end of the trip approached, he wrote more understandingly: "this is a beautiful spot [on Dog Lake] and save a cross which marked the grave of some incautious voyageur I saw nothing to recall the dangers that I had heard of. . . . Nevertheless, several canoe men have been drowned at this Island Portage and its dangers for the sake of the traveller had better be enhanced than diminished. The skill of the voyageur and great ease with which a dexterous crew can manage the canoe render us senseless to the true dangers that surround us, and when I reflect how often, in the midst of a dreadful rapid, when my men were literally suspending the canoe by braking back with their poles and paddles to prevent its dashing on the rocks that surround us, and that the breaking of a pole or slipping of a paddle might have left us to the ravings of the torrent, I am but little disposed to decry the dangers of a canoe voyage to the interior."

Unfortunately Delafield does not give us much idea of the appearance of his nine men, but one of the two outstanding marks of a voyageur is to be noticed in a casual statement of his: "Observe a smoke on an island as we enter [Crooked Lake]. . . . The crew commence their chant & it draws out a band of Indians, boys and girls, in all 20. In the group we discover a red cap of the voyageur & approach at his hail." The red stocking cap and fringed and braided sash of many colours were the hallmarks of the voyageur.

Once more Delafield refers to the food consumed: "My crew having gluttonized too much the preceding night, by eating flour boiled (in balls) in their corn soup, I was delayed, by reason of headaches amongst the crew . . . The business of eating is uppermost in the thoughts of a Canadian voyageur. Not used to have enough, & used to have that little of the coarsest kind (corn & grease), it is not perhaps strange that they should be used to grumble. . . . Strange animals, they will patiently subsist days & weeks upon the tripe du roche, when no provisions can be had; but are never patient when surrounded by a plenty," as on Delafield's journey, when they had flour as well as their ordinary fare.

The tripe du roche, which Delafield mentions more than once, is a common lichen in the North Country. To say the least, as it grows on dry rocks it is not appetizing in appearance, and it is leathery in consistency. In times of starvation the men would also chew canoe gum. In more cheerful vein, Delafield describes how the voyageurs cooked their game: "Feeling the want of a change of diet I have some rice boiled, which with a pair of ducks that my Indian guide shot, makes an excellent supper. The ducks are roasted voyageur fashion by splitting them, and extending the parts on a forked stick which is stuck in the dirt by the fire! They roast quickly and well in this way. Fresh fish cooked in the same way is very good. The Frenchmen eat the entrails &c. of the ducks as a great relish."

Delafield mentions constantly the natives of the region, including the guide he employed to take him through the maze of islands in Lake of the Woods: "He, together with a boy of 10 or 11 years old, accompanies us in their little



COURTESY FREDA LAWSON

The voyageurs have cut trees to moor their canoe by the rock while they rest. William Armstrong painting.

canoe of about 10 feet, and are able to keep ahead of my canoe with its seven paddles. The Indians use very wide blade paddles, and the North canoemen very small ones. The Indian paddles slowly & the Canadian quickly." Unlike most bourgeois on trips of this sort, Delafield paddled with his men.

Thus far Delafield has been our reporter concerning the voyageurs of the early 1820s. Now let us listen to a woman of 1830. She was a bride on an unusual honeymoon—Frances Simpson, the wife of the overseas governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, George Simpson (later Sir George), and this was her first canoe trip into the interior. "Left La Chine at 4 A.M. in two Canoes manned by 15 hands each, all strong, active, fine looking Canadians . . . Our Canoe, a most beautiful craft, airy and elegant beyond description, was 35 feet in length."

Her husband, being a complete Jehu, travelled at most times faster and with longer days of paddling than did other brigades of trade canoes. So, Frances reports at dawn of the next day, as of nearly every succeeding day, that "the people were roused by Mr. Simpson's well know call of 'Lève Lève Lève,' when they all started up, covered with their Blankets in which they wrap themselves, sleeping all weathers in the open air on the ground. The Canoes were then laden and we embarked at 3 O'clock . . . travelled till 9 O'clock, and breakfasted . . . "

Then, on the track again, "every thing was calm & quiet, not a sound to be heard excepting the stroke of the paddle, and the clear, mellow voice of our principal vocalist Tomma Felix, singing 'La Belle Rosier' and other sweet Voyageur airs. Dined at 2 O'clock . . . and travelled till 9 when we encamped." Time and again Frances mentions the singing, indicating how much it was a feature of canoe travel in her thoughts.

Her female companion was somewhat on the portly side and when it became necessary for the voyageurs to carry her and Mrs Simpson across a mudhole, disaster ensued. "Tomma Felix took me up in his arms, & Nicholas Monique, an old Indian, volunteered his services in transporting my companion . . . but Nicholas' load being rather heavier, he absolutely came to a standstill, in the midst of a bog, and declared he could not take the Lady a step farther in his arms, but if she would get on his back, he thought he might accomplish the journey. Mr. Simpson . . . persuaded Mrs. McTavish (with some difficulty) as a last resource to do so . . . which she at length agreed to, and on the back of Nicholas accordingly mounted: the scene however was so ludicrous that the bystanders could not resist a laugh, in which Mrs. McTavish joined so heartily, that poor Nicholas was thrown off his equilibrium, stumbled forwards, fell on his face, and gave his unfortunate rider a summerset over his head, into the mud."

Frances Simpson did not complain on her voyage which she took good-humouredly, but she confided to her diary "that a Canoe voyage is not one which an English Lady would take for pleasure; and though I have gone through it very well, there are many little inconveniences to be met with, not altogether pleasing or congenial to the taste of a Stranger: viz. rising between 1 & 2 A.M.

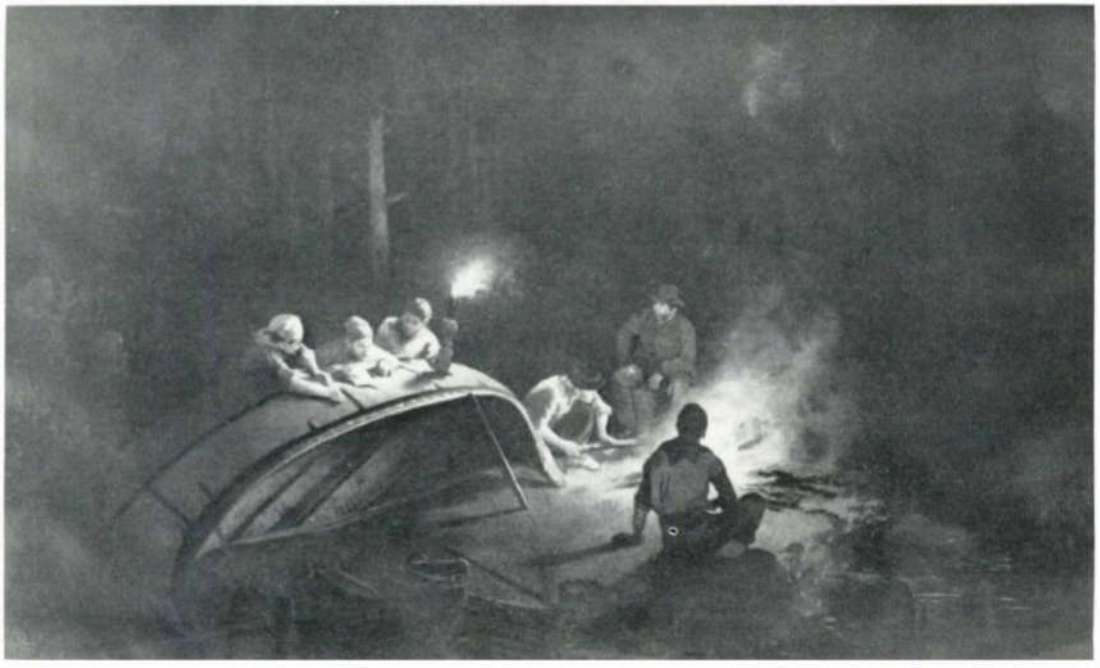
sleeping sometimes on swampy ground, sometimes on hard rocks, and at others on sand, (the worst of all materials for a couch) with no other bedding than a couple of Blankets & Cloaks:—living the greater part of the time on salted provisions without vegetables:—exposed to a scorching sun, cold winds, and heavy rain—putting up late some evenings drenched to the skin, and finding the Encampment so wet, as to render it impossible to dry any of our wet clothes, when it became necessary to wear them the following day in the same state."

Our third reporter was a soldier-surveyor, whose letters have been published recently as *In Search of the Magnetic North.** Captain John Henry Lefroy, R.A., like the other two travellers of the Voyageurs Highway had the artist's eye and the human touch. His description of a camp scene is worth notice: "I am behind the tent door with blanket and greatcoat spread on the rock beside me, by way of bed, but I should like to place you in the door, to look with me over our picturesque encampment. Imagine a table rock shewing its grey face between patches of moss and grass with young fir and juniper growing about one of the crevices; three large birch bark canoes, the prettiest vessels that float, lie bottom upwards with keel to the wind, the open side to the fires; and under them and before are standing or lying some fifty voyageurs and Indians, talking French Patois, with more oaths than you would like to hear, and the light plays on the white tents behind and their red shirts and caps in true Rembrandt effects."

Lefroy is one of the few tourists, if not the only one, to report the voyageurs' manner of speech. "They talk very bad French, full of provincialisms, icit for ici, fret for froid, potatoes, patats, etc." He gives a further example of their speech in recounting, in vivid detail, how he journeyed for nineteen days by dog-team and cariole in the far north from Fort Chipewyan to Fort Simpson, with the thermometer as low as forty-one degrees below zero. First he tells of his very comfortable cariole drawn by three dogs; then of the method of voyageur encamping in the snow and the meal of pemmican and tea; then the clothes he wore; next how the men slept: "I was sometimes prevented from sleeping at night by the cold, but the men, who all lie in one heap, seldom complain of it, and they take it in turn which shall get up to make up the fire, which is never quite burnt out, the rest lie snug up until they hear it blazing. Amusing scenes take place in the morning in catching and harnessing the dogs. I never saw such profound expressions of resignation, dejection and dismay, as they regularly exhibited when called up . . . 'L'Anglois! Papillon! icit, avance! avance donc l'Anglois!' and so on." Here is observable the retention of the seventeenth-century French, that migrated from Normandy with the ancestors of these men.

One of Lefroy's last letters, written from Toronto on the home stretch in 1844 is perhaps the perfect end to his and our account: "In spite of all I could do people would give them [his French and Indian voyageurs] liquor, and they arrived at Toronto singing French paddling songs all up the streets, so that I heard them half a mile off . . . just as they were accustomed to do on arriving at a Fort—this and their out-of-the-way dress, not to include my own, made my entry a very public one. . . . I packed my men off the very next day. . . . Mr. [Peter] Dease . . . who knew old Louis, the noisiest, was going the same way and it was a pleasure to him to meet old voyageurs again. He will look after them down [to Quebec]—for they did not speak English, and knew no more in what part of the world they might be in than if set down in China." ◆

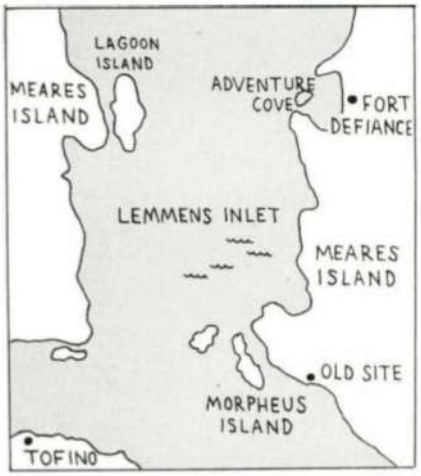
*Edited by G. F. G. Stanley, 1955, The Macmillan Company of Canada, by whose permission these excerpts are quoted.



Night camp in a forest, painted by Frances Hopkins, with voyageurs patching their canoe with a piece of birch bark; the torch provides light and serves to soften the gum.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES

FORT DEFIANCE



Relics discovered last summer may establish the wintering place in 1791-2 of Captain Robert Gray

BY JACK FRY

Photos by Harry McPhee

ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING historical finds in many years may have been unearthed last summer on a little island off the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia—the spot where the American fur trader, Captain Robert Gray, built a log fort in the fall of 1791.

Captain Gray was the first man to carry the Stars and Stripes round the world. But his greatest achievement, so far as the world is concerned, was the discovery of the mighty Columbia River—which was named after his ship, 212-ton *Columbia Rediviva*.

After spending the summer of 1791 trading blankets, copper and iron to the Queen Charlotte Islands and coastal Indians in exchange for sea otter skins which were to be sold in China, Captain Gray and nearly fifty men under his command spent the winter on an island at Clayoquot Sound, near what is now the village of Tofino. They made a clearing near the water's edge on this island and built a log house, which they named Fort Defiance. Cannon and muskets stored in this small fort offered the men protection against hostile Indians, while they spent the winter months building a 45-ton trading sloop called the *Adventure*.

Detailed accounts of the experience of these fur traders in the Pacific Northwest were preserved for posterity, when the Massachusetts Historical Society published excerpts from the *Columbia's* log book, twenty-five years ago. But historians had searched for years without finding the actual site of Fort Defiance. It was generally believed that the fort had been built on Meares Island, near a smaller island named Morpheus, almost due east of Tofino.

Then, a young construction foreman and amateur historian from Tofino shed some new light on the mystery. Carrying the reproduction of a sketch of Adventure Cove drawn one hundred and seventy-five years ago by George Davidson of the *Columbia*, Kenneth Gibson, stumbled upon what is now believed to be the true site.

It is a deserted little cove, overgrown with cedar trees, about two-thirds of the way up the eastern shore of Lemmens Inlet, on Meares Island—about four miles north of the spot where it was previously thought the fort had stood. Mr Gibson matched the sketch to the existing shoreline and then unearthed two overgrown piles of brick, which may have once been part of the twin chimneys of old Fort Defiance.

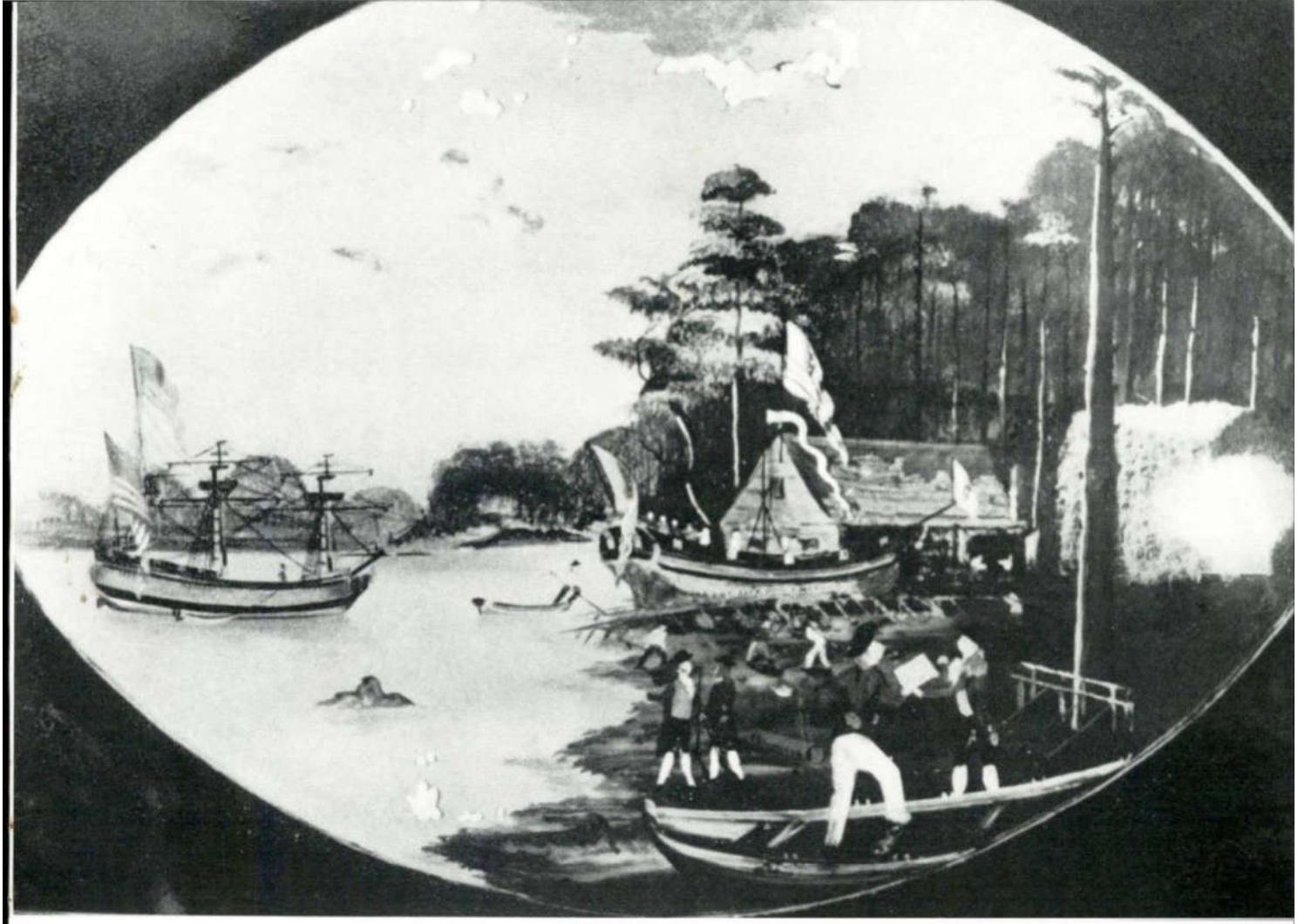
Following this he was joined by Harry McPhee of Vancouver in a further search. They found the complete base of a chimney and retrieved more bricks by diving at the base of Rock Bluff, described in Boit's log as "a bluff point of rocks, where she [the *Columbia*] lay'd as to a wharfe not even touching the ground at low water". Samples of the bricks and some charcoal were given to a government archaeologist for detailed examination and possible dating.

Numerous Canadian and American yachtsmen have since visited the site, and many of them were known to have carried away some of the bricks as souvenirs.

There is one more clue yet to be found which might confirm that the little cove is really the famous Adventure Cove—that is the skeleton of one of the crew members known to have been buried on shore. John Boit, the *Columbia's* fifth mate, noted in his log that the body of boatswain Benjamin Harding, who died of dysentery on 21 March 1792, was buried near the old fort.

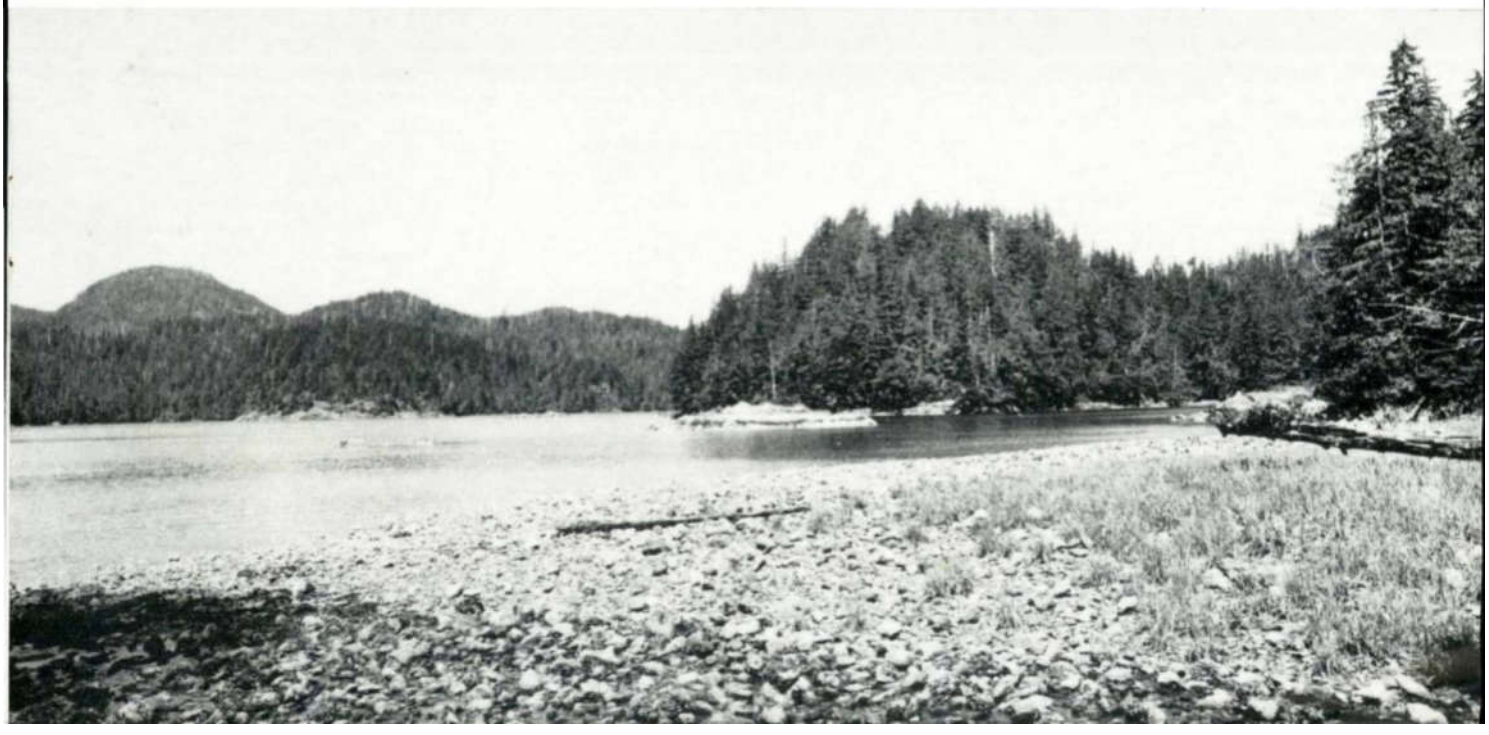
The *Columbia*, on her second voyage round the world, sailed from Boston Harbour on 28 September 1790, with £1,591.10s. worth of goods to be traded to the Indians in exchange for sea otter skins. She passed the Cape Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa, turned southwards and stopped for a few days at the Falkland Islands, near Cape Horn, where the crew shot nearly 1,000 ducks

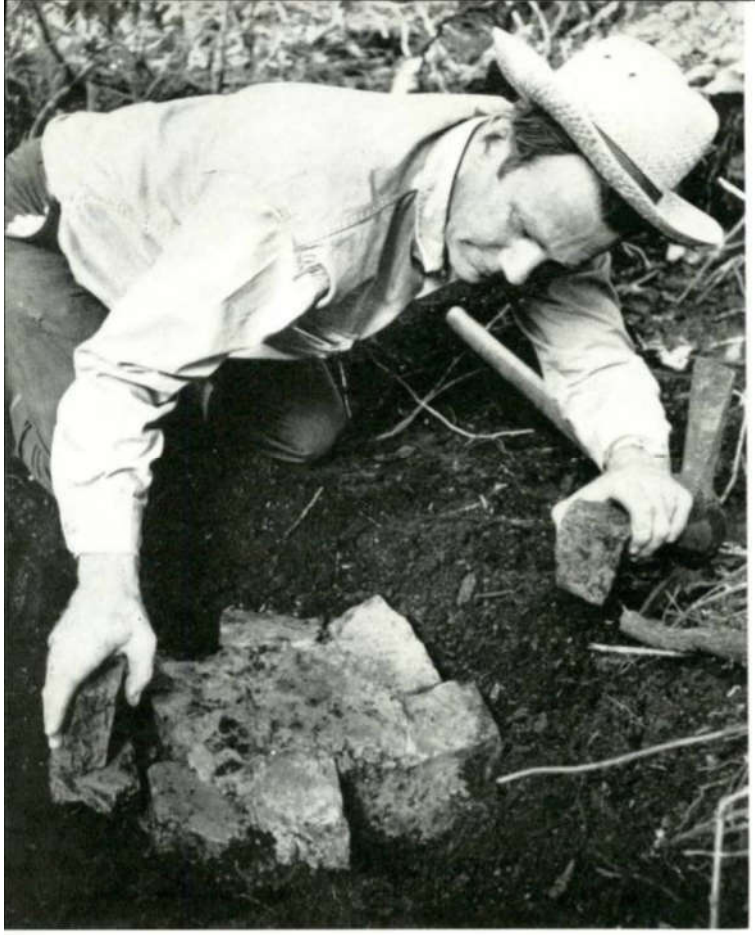
Mr Fry is legislative reporter for the Victoria "Colonist"



COURTESY MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

George Davidson sketched his ship the "Columbia" in winter quarters in Adventure Cove 1791-2. The sloop "Adventure", under construction, is shown on the ways in front of Fort Defiance. The photograph below shows Adventure Cove today; note the rock in the water, the four hills in the background, and in centre the natural rock wharf where ships could moor.





Ken Gibson with one of the later discoveries, the base of a chimney with bricks cemented together with clay mortar.

and geese as well as six wild hogs of a Spanish breed.

The ship did not make land again until 4 June 1791, when—with ten crew members seriously ill from scurvy—she reached a point somewhere between Nootka and Clayoquot Sound, on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The *Columbia* dropped anchor the next day, in an area known to the American fur traders as Coxes Harbour, where Chief Hannah of the "Ahhousett" (Ahousat) village came on board and several hundred curious Indians paddled out in their log canoes to meet their white visitors. The principal village here was in a harbour called "Opitsatah" (Opitisaht) and was governed by the warlike chief Wickananish, whose family paid frequent visits to the *Columbia*.

The ill seamen soon recovered their health, largely because of the fish, a variety of greens and several deer which were brought out by the Indians. It was noted that the natives wore conical, cedar-bark hats; the men were nude except for a type of blanket slung over their shoulders, and the women were covered from neck to ankle with garments made of tree bark.

Attoo, the captain's servant from the Hawaiian Islands, ran away among the Indians but was brought back to the ship after one of the local chiefs was held on board as a hostage.

On the first dig bricks and charcoal were found here under 15 inches of soil.

The *Columbia* sailed on 16 June and spent the rest of the season in trading along the northwest coast. Copper goods, iron, and cloth were traded for sea otter and land furs, while nails, beads and fish-hooks were exchanged for fish, greens, and a few deer.

The coastal Indians lived a rugged existence, even though food was plentiful, and life was often reduced to a struggle for survival against disease and wars with neighbouring tribes. Some had suffered smallpox, and told the Americans it had been brought by the Spaniards. Others offered to sell the white men the young children they had taken in raids.

In the Queen Charlotte Islands, the sixteen-year-old fifth mate, John Boit, son of a wealthy Boston merchant, jotted down in his log that the native women wore pieces of wood about the size of goose eggs in their lower lips. "Itt's considered as an ornament, but in my opinion looks very gastly . . . the females was not very Chaste, but their lip pieces was enough to disgust any Civilized being, however some of the Crew was quite partial."

Although the Indians generally displayed friendliness towards the fur traders, the white men carried weapons and usually shunned any experience which would put this friendship to the test. Nevertheless, the Americans were overtaken by tragedy on 12 August 1791 when three of the crew were taken by the Indians. Second mate Joshua Caswell had taken boatswain's mate John Folger and seaman Joseph Barnes fishing out of sight of the *Columbia*. Caswell's body, "strip'd perfectly naked and stab'd in upwards of twenty places" was later found in the bottom of their drifting boat; the naked body of Barnes was seen on a beach but left there, and there was no trace of Folger.

The *Columbia* anchored in Clayoquot Harbor on 18 September 1791. Captain Gray took two boats up the sound the next day, looking for a place to build the

DAVE PATERSON

Harry McPhee brings up bricks from the base of Rock Bluff, the natural wharf where ships could lay alongside. The cargo of the "Columbia" included 2,000 bricks.

Adventure. He found a suitable site "about four leagues from where the ship lay," and on the 20th of September the crew towed and sailed the *Columbia* into the cove which they named Adventure Cove. They remained at the cove until 25 March 1792.

The woods at Adventure Cove were cleared away and a log house (Fort Defiance) built. It was mounted with two cannon and had holes in the walls through which muskets could be fired. The stem, stern-post and part of the floor timbers of the *Adventure*, which had been brought from Boston for this purpose, were unloaded from the *Columbia* and set up on a ways which had been built on the beach. Captain Gray placed his first mate, Robert Haswell, in command of the seamen and mechanics who were to build the *Adventure*. Blacksmith and boat builders shops were placed nearby and two saw-pits were set up, "so that Adventure Cove soon had the appearance of a young shipyard," according to Boit's version of the operation.

Captain Gray and some of his officers visited nearby Indian villages to doctor sick natives and attend occasional potlatches, but the Indians eventually began acting suspiciously and were seen preparing feverishly for war. Some even wanted the white men to trade them muskets because they allegedly were preparing for a major war with some neighbouring tribe.

About the time that the *Adventure* was ready for sea, it was learnt from the Hawaiian servant that Chief Wickananish had asked him to wet the traders' gunpowder, so the white men would be unable to defend themselves from a night attack. A minor skirmish followed but the Americans were prepared for an attack, and the engagement ended with neither side losing more than a night's sleep over the incident. Captain Gray, however, exacted his revenge by burning more than two hundred Indian houses at Opitisaht when he sailed away.

Haswell remained in command of the *Adventure* and traded to the northward during the summer of 1792, while Captain Gray sailed his ship into the Columbia River in May of that year. The *Columbia* later rejoined the *Adventure*, but struck a rock near Milbanke Sound and had to put into the Spanish settlement at Nootka to effect repairs.

With the season ended, Captain Gray sold the *Adventure* to the Spaniards in September 1792, took Haswell back as his second mate and sailed for China. The *Columbia* disposed of her sea otter cargo in China, took on a cargo of Oriental goods and headed home, dropping anchor in Boston Harbour on 29 July 1793.

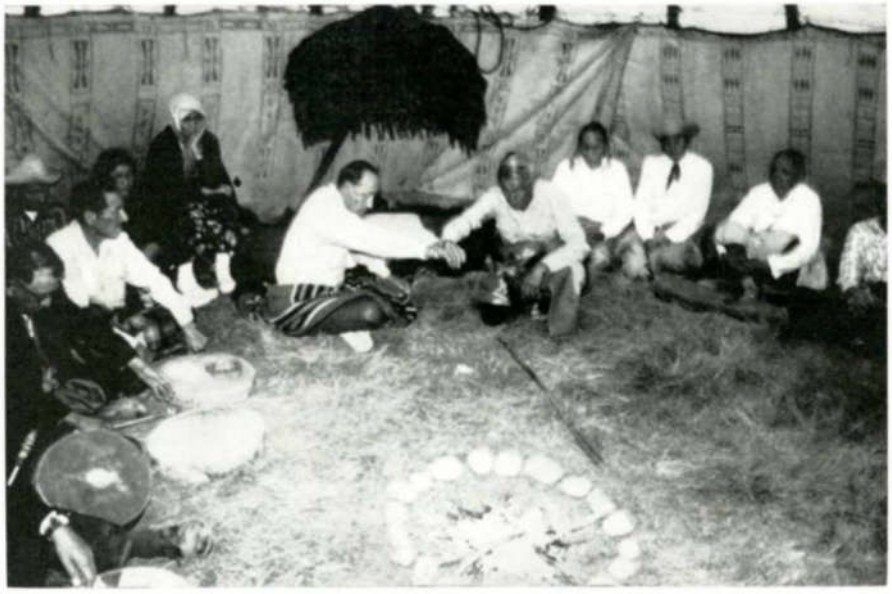
It is not known what became of the *Adventure* under Spanish command. The *Columbia* was demolished in 1801, and the cancellation date on her register in the U.S. National Archives bore the date October 15 and the notation: "ript to pieces".

Captain Gray, who was born in Tiverton, Rhode Island, on 10 May 1755, became master of coasting vessels out of Boston, after returning from his second journey round the world. It is believed he died of yellow fever contracted on a voyage from Charleston, South Carolina, in the summer of 1806. ◆

TRANSFERRAL OF A BUNDLE

BY ELLEN WATT

The medicine bundles of the Plains Indians contained a collection of sacred objects usually revealed in a vision or dream as symbolic of the power of a certain spirit. They were opened only on ceremonial occasions or in the ritual transferral to a new owner who had acquired the bundle at considerable expense.



Medicine Pipe Bundle hangs in place of honour at back of former owner's tipi. The shaman moves the owner's hand over a small ceremonial fire before the bundle can be opened. The prospective new owner was not allowed to see this part of the ritual.

THE POUNDING of buffalo skin drums signalled the beginning of the sacred transferral ritual. The ancient Medicine Pipe Bundle was to be transferred from its present owner, Lewis Running Rabbit, 70-year-old Blackfoot Indian, to the owner-to-be, now waiting in one of the tipis on the Blackfoot Reserve near Cluny, Alberta, 70 miles southeast of Calgary.

The pattern of the ritual would be similar in almost every detail to transferrals which had taken place among the Blackfoot Indians long before the white men had invaded their land. But on this Sunday morning in September there was one very significant difference. The new owner of the Medicine Pipe Bundle would be a white man.

This particular Bundle was being transferred for the last time in its 110-year history. It was to be placed in Alberta's new Provincial Museum and Archives in Edmonton by John Hellson, assistant curator in charge of the Indian History Division. He is believed to be the only white man who has ever taken part in these sacred rituals.

Indians of the Blackfoot Confederacy now regard John Hellson as the true owner of the sacred Bundles acquired by transferral. He has made arrangements for about

Mrs Watt prepares school broadcasts for the Alberta Department of Education. All photos courtesy of Alberta Provincial Museum and Archives, Edmonton.

twenty more such transferrals, including the famed "Long Time Medicine Pipe Bundle" mentioned by Ewers and by Wissler, believed to be the oldest in existence. It was being transferred in the "dog days" before the western Indians had horses. As a result, these valuable Indian possessions will find their final home in the new museum.

"About fifty years ago this particular Medicine Pipe Bundle would be exchanged for thirty head of horses, many blankets and food," explained John Hellson as he spread the contents of the precious Bundle out on a counter at Beaver House, where the provincial museum property is stored. "So you see, only the wealthy people of the tribe could own it."

This particular Bundle contains the hides of mammals, feathers of birds (some extinct), an owl skin, common loon skin, a rattle, a large medicine pipe and a smaller woman's pipe. There is also a whistle made from a sawed-off section of a very old North West Company trade gun. This helped the experts to determine the age of the Bundle. The innermost layer of wrapping is old calico (probably received in trade from early Hudson's Bay traders), the second layer is the skin of a black bear, next is an elkskin robe, and the outer covering is a tartan shawl.

The value of this Bundle is in its meaning as a symbol of power and its relationship to old Indian legends. It was believed by the Indians that the Medicine Pipe Bundle was first given by the Thunder, so it is always opened with much ceremony at the first thunder of spring. As owner of the Bundle, John Hellson will be responsible for planning and carrying out this opening ritual on the Blackfoot Reserve next spring. The Medicine Pipe drums, now in the Alberta Museum, must be beaten only at the opening of the Bundle. The older Blackfoot Indians believe that there would be thunder if the drums were beaten at any other time. Early rituals often lasted for several days, with the singing of 360 songs. However, only 36 songs were sung (four times each) at the last transferral ritual at Cluny. These have been taped for safe-keeping in the museum.

John Hellson has explained that certain taboos, as well as prestige, went along with ownership of the Medicine Pipe Bundle. In the old days, after a certain period, the owner was often anxious to get rid of it and to find someone who would have to pay him well in exchange.

"The owner was aware of the importance of this Bundle and had to keep it in a very special place," he explained. "No one was allowed to shout near it or even to pass in front of it. So it was no wonder that the owner became impatient to pass it on to someone else. He had paid a great deal for it when he was chosen to be owner,

The procession moves towards the tipi (decorated with Big Rock design) where John Hellson is waiting.

The white man is carried in a blanket by the Blackfoot party, which stopped four times for prayers, to the tipi containing the bundle. Inside, Hellson's face is painted with red ochre in design representing sun, moon, and sundogs and seated beside the bundle he wears headband of white buffalo wool coloured with red ochre.

Prior to the transferral Hellson, now wearing an eagle feather, assists in making the altar. In the ritual of the saskatoon berry soup, above right, each participant holds a berry, to be placed in the ground, and says a prayer before eating. Beside Hellson is the open Medicine Pipe Bundle then Laurie Plume, the shaman, who takes each article from it. On the left is an upturned drum. Below, the owl dance is performed, with an owl skin from the bundle.

and now he wanted to find some wealthy person to pay him."

It was like a game with the Indians. Someone was chosen to help to spy on the owner-to-be. When he was caught off guard he had to be touched by a smoking pipe, carried by the owner's representative. At first there would be a great commotion, with the prospective owner's wife lamenting loudly outside the tipi, telling everyone that her husband must pay a great price for the Bundle. After some discussion they came to the decision that there was some advantage in owning this powerful Bundle given by the Thunder. So the songs began. After songs to the sun, the new owner was tossed in a blanket and carried to the former owner's tipi for the remaining part of the ritual—the painting of the face, the songs, dances, story telling and finally the exchange of blankets and gifts.

The century-old ritual was repeated when John Hellson became the new owner. Although he knew ahead of time what was going to happen, it required an unusual amount of patience for a white man. He had to sit quietly in the tipi with his "ceremonial wife and child", pretending to be unaware of the two-hour preparatory ritual taking place in another tipi. There, Lewis Running Rabbit was opening the Medicine Pipe Bundle for the

last time to the accompaniment of drums and singing.

Mr. Hellson described the part of the ritual which involved him: "Suddenly the drums stopped. Shortly afterwards 93-year-old One Gun crept quietly into my tipi. He was chosen to 'spy' on me because he is the oldest surviving Blackfoot and he remembers most of the ritual. He was holding the smoking pipe as he pretended to search around the tipi for me. When he saw me he touched me on the head with the pipe. As soon as he had done that he blew a whistle, and the drumming and the singing started right away.

"Then Laurie Plume appeared. He is a 70-year-old Blood Indian who was chosen to play the part of the shaman or medicine man because he is one of the few to remember most of the songs. Laurie Plume and One Gun led the way for the procession while four men carried me in a blanket to the owner's tipi. They stopped four times on the way for prayers. When we all reached the tipi, I was placed beside the Medicine Pipe Bundle."

The agreed price of this Bundle was a certain amount of cash for the Indians involved as well as six blankets and a pair of moccasins for the former owner. Along with the Bundle, Mr Hellson received one blanket, one pair of trousers and a pair of moccasins. This represented a complete exchange of clothing, which actually took place in the old days.

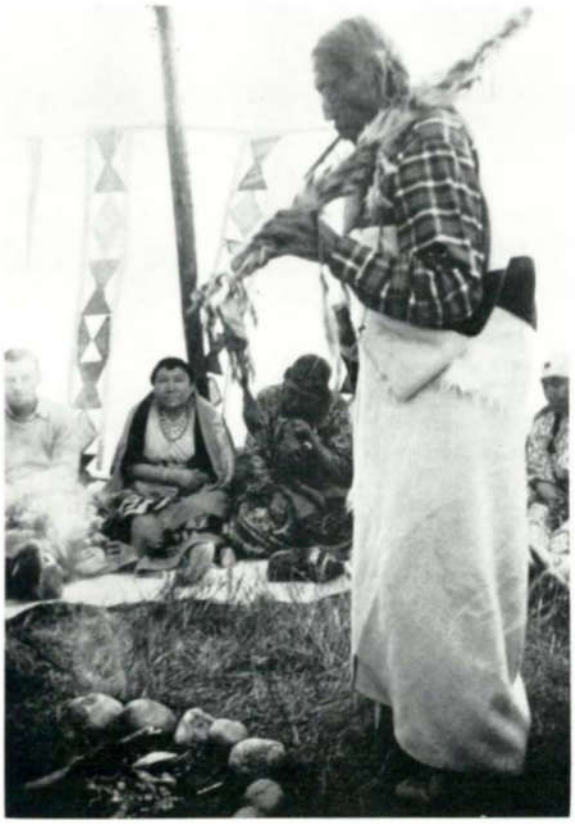
This was the second sacred Bundle received by Mr Hellson from the Blackfoot Indians by transferral. The first was the Beaver Bundle which he received at Cardston in the spring of 1965. By owning this he became one of the Beaver Men. The old Indians who remember the legends believe that the Beaver Man will never fear water, has power over all water birds and animals, has a long memory and will become the chronicler or historian of the tribe.

In an earlier ceremonial transferral of a Beaver Bundle the former owner, Calling Last, holds lynx tail over head to mark new owner.

The latter characteristic particularly suits John Hellson. He has set out to keep detailed records of Blackfoot history by means of artifacts, tapes, film, slides, and written accounts. He is a quiet Englishman who was born in Penzance, Cornwall, and is now closely connected to the Blackfoot Indians of Alberta by marriage to a young Blackfoot woman. Her father, Dave Melting Tallow, works as an interpreter in the Provincial Museum in Edmonton. He assists his son-in-law with the translation of the taped songs and stories which have been recorded at the transferrals.

John Hellson's interest in the history of Canadian Indians goes back to his boyhood in England. He read all he could find about Indians, and after coming to this country he lived for ten years among different tribes in Canada and the United States. By his ability to talk the Blackfoot language he has gained from the old men a wealth of information about their legends and the meaning of their sacred rituals. These transferrals could not have been accomplished without his keen interest and position of trust with the people of the great Blackfoot Confederacy, as well as the financial backing of the Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta. As a result the details of this segment of plains Indian culture will be preserved for posterity. ◆

Calling Last, 96-year-old Blood Indian, dances with the medicine pipe from the Beaver Bundle.



CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

Centennial Canoe Pageant

THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO Canada was wilderness, known only to the Indians until explorers from European nations began their exciting voyages into the heart of North America, voyages made on foot and by canoe. This year, in the latter part of May, one hundred husky young men from across the country gathered in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the confederation of the first provinces as the nation of Canada. They gathered here with a purpose—to revive a colourful chapter of Canadian history. They will paddle and portage their ten canoes from Rocky Mountain House in Alberta to the Exhibition site in Montreal, a distance of 3,283 miles by water. These modern voyageurs will retrace the old fur routes which played such an important part in Canada's exploration and development.

The first voyageurs faced rapids, flies, starvation, an uncertain reception by the Indians, and every barrier Nature uses to keep man in his place. The 1967 paddlers are at least sure of their welcome, which may in fact become a problem, for some ninety communities en route are planning receptions, varying from steer barbecues, to street dancing, to fiddling contests, for the men "as they round the bend". This means the canoes will have to reach these destinations with clocklike precision and the crews be ready to take part in the festivities.

Chief Voyageur W. H. V. Matthews, retired colonel with the Canadian army, had the responsibility for organizing the event which is sponsored by the Centennial Commission, the provincial and territorial governments, and Expo '67. Bill Matthews is a firm believer in the fact that the canoe pageant is one of the most appropriate athletic events to celebrate Canada's Centennial. "We are re-enacting history" he said. "In addition, it is a unique combination of stamina, endurance and courage as the paddlers will face difficulties similar to those encountered by their predecessors."

All paddlers are Canadian, with one crew from each province made up of six paddlers and three spares or road party. On the water the team captain is in charge and generally sits in the stern of the canoe. As of old the bowman sets the pace which in fast travel will be sixty or more strokes a minute (comparable to the expert voyageurs of Governor George Simpson's express canoe) but in prolonged hauls will be about forty a minute.

The ninety paddlers, whose ages range from 17 to 51—average mid-20s—include professional men as well as miners, farmers, Indians, Eskimos, students, guides, and musicians who will enliven the evening camp. They have been toughened by practice trips and a vigorous winter training program that included road work, weight-lifting, and indoor pool paddling against a wall. Paddling from

dawn to dusk they should average 35 to 40 miles a day, sometimes over 70 miles under ideal conditions. To relieve fatigue they switch paddling sides from time to time.

The specially made canoes are of fibreglass construction built on the lines of the old North canoes and painted to simulate birch-bark. They are 25 feet long, 4 feet wide and 18 inches deep and weigh about 250 pounds. The canoes bear the names of their respective provinces or territories and the names of the explorers selected by them as being representative of their past history. For the Northwest Territories—Sir Alexander Mackenzie; Yukon Territory—Robert Campbell; British Columbia—Simon Fraser; Alberta—David Thompson; Saskatchewan—Henry Kelsey; Manitoba—Pierre Radisson; Ontario—William McGillivray; Quebec—La Vérendrye; New Brunswick—Samuel de Champlain; Nova Scotia—John Cabot.

Paddles, of laminated wood, are selected by the paddler and his captain and carefully sanded for most effective speed and control. Most of the paddles have eight-inch wide blades but some, for special conditions, may be as wide as twelve inches or as narrow as six inches. The early voyageurs used narrower paddles, less likely to break and as substitute poles in negotiating rapids.

In communities along the way, where they will give demonstrations, the paddlers will dress as old-time voyageurs.

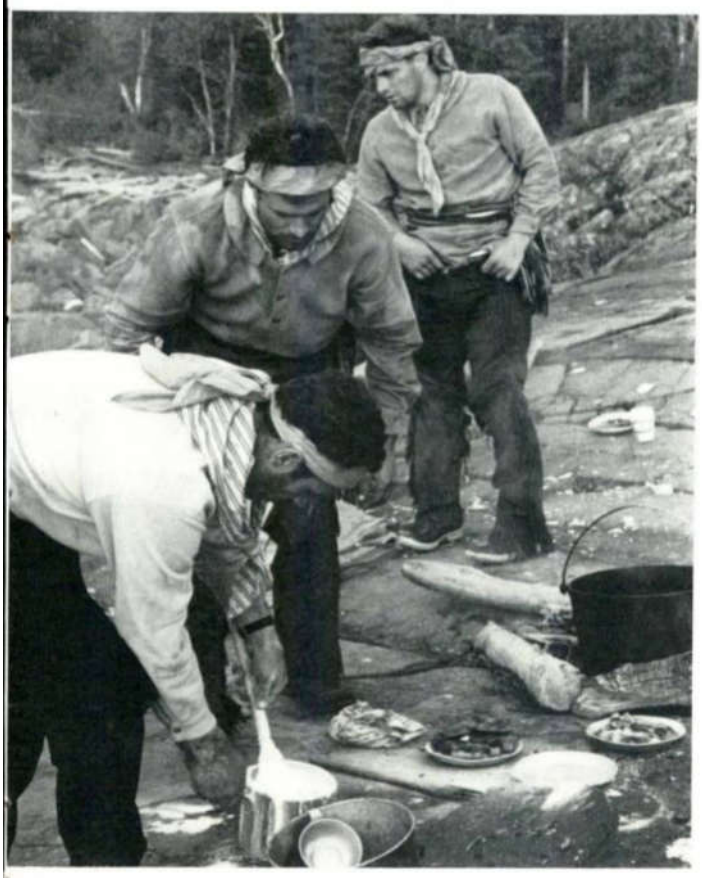
Their route takes them down the North Saskatchewan River to The Pas then south through Lakes Winnipegosis and Manitoba to the Assiniboine River and the Red. From there to Lake Winnipeg and up the Winnipeg River. Lake of the Woods and Rainy River follow as they trace the border country between Ontario and Minnesota to reach Lake Superior. More big water follows through Lake Huron to the French River, Lake Nipissing, the Mattawa River and finally the Ottawa River to the St Lawrence, Montreal and the island site of Canada's Expo '67.

Some seventy portages have to be made when the crews will be carrying, instead of paddling, their canoes and equipment for 60 miles in all. The longest portage is the 19 miles from Lake Manitoba to the Assiniboine River; the shortest is just a few yards.

Provisions for the long voyage required careful advance planning. In place of the traditional voyageur fare of pemmican in the west, corn or peas and pork in the east, supplies for the centennial paddlers included 30,000 eggs, 2½ tons of bacon, 60,000 pancakes, 10,000 quarts of milk, half a ton of honey, 6 tons of steak, 2½ tons of potatoes, 5,000 loaves of bread, and 1½ tons of butter. In this age of water pollution they also had to carry drinking water, an idea that would have seemed laughable to the early voyageurs. But those voyageurs

In trial runs paddlers mastered the turbulent waters of the Fraser in B.C. (left) and fought through the rapids at Lachine near Montreal (bottom); the voyageurs develop hearty appetites for camp fare.

N F B



E. P. I.

Some of the Centennial Pageant canoes lined up ready for a sprint.

would have welcomed the 200,000 ounces of insect repellant included in the modern supplies.

Road parties attend the brigade to carry tents, supplies, and relief paddlers, and to set up camp for the canoeists. In wilderness areas the teams carry their own food and shelter and set up overnight camps. Otherwise the canoes are as lightly laden as possible.

One hundred and four days is the time allotted for the brigade to reach the Expo site in Montreal in September. There the awards are given. Every man on the teams completing the voyage receives at least $1,000. Throughout the trip all water movement is timed and the team with the shortest travel time from start to finish receives the winning award of $2,500 for each crew member. Second and third place teams also receive special awards.

So ends the long voyage, from the Rockies to the St Lawrence, of the Centennial Canoe Pageant. The spirit of the voyageur lives on. ◆

A canoe pageant of 1881 when paddlers and passengers gathered at Kenora to greet the Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne. CPR

IN OTHER DAYS

TRAVELLERS HAD THIS TO SAY ABOUT VOYAGING BY CANOE

Chief Factor Archibald McDonald, travelling with Governor George Simpson in 1828 in two light canoes, each with a crew of nine men:

As we waft along under easy sail, the men with a clean change and mounting new feathers [dressed up for an arrival] the Highland bagpipes in the Governor's canoe, was echoed by the bugle in mine; then these were laid aside, on nearer approach to port, to give free scope to the vocal organs of about eighteen Canadians (French) to chant one of those voyageur airs peculiar to them, and always so perfectly rendered. Our entry to Jack River House [Norway House] about seven p.m., was certainly more imposing than anything hitherto seen in this part of the Indian country.

Took in the following stores here, viz:—23½ lbs. cheese, 13 lbs. hyson tea, 1 lb. mustard, 84 lbs. ham, 4 gallon kegs port wine, 3 one gallon kegs of madeira, 21 lbs. butter, 2 casks biscuit, (fine and common) each 56 lbs., 1 keg port wine, 1 keg spirits for the men. The canoes, between them, had two bags pemican, two bags flour, and a keg of pork from the Governor's stores, besides a few little necessaries for the use of the canoes.

[A week later at Cumberland House] Here took in, for the trip, each canoe a bag of common pemican, and for the mess, a bag of dried meat (50 lbs.) and 80 buffalo tongues, besides old and new potatoes, eggs, candles, and 4 gallons of spirits for the men.

The Bishop of Rupert's Land, David Anderson, in the Winnipeg River country in July 1852:

We passed along a small lake with some picturesque islands. On leaving it we had two routes practicable; the one chosen was that by the Pinawa River, as having two portages less than the other, and also as having less of current against us. (The name Pinawa, is derived from a verb, which means it is slow, calm or gentle.) The two first falls on this route were pretty but small, not above twenty feet wide, and perhaps, twelve high. The third was a continuous succession of cascades, and altogether a long portage. We had then a beautiful gorge, not above six feet wide, through which the water passed over the solid rock. The luggage was removed, and the canoe taken up with great care by the men, some tracking with a line, others pushing it up from behind. It was one of our pleasantest days and very exciting. The course of the river was very meandering and narrow throughout, in some places a mere opening between rocks; all this made the scenery extremely pretty.

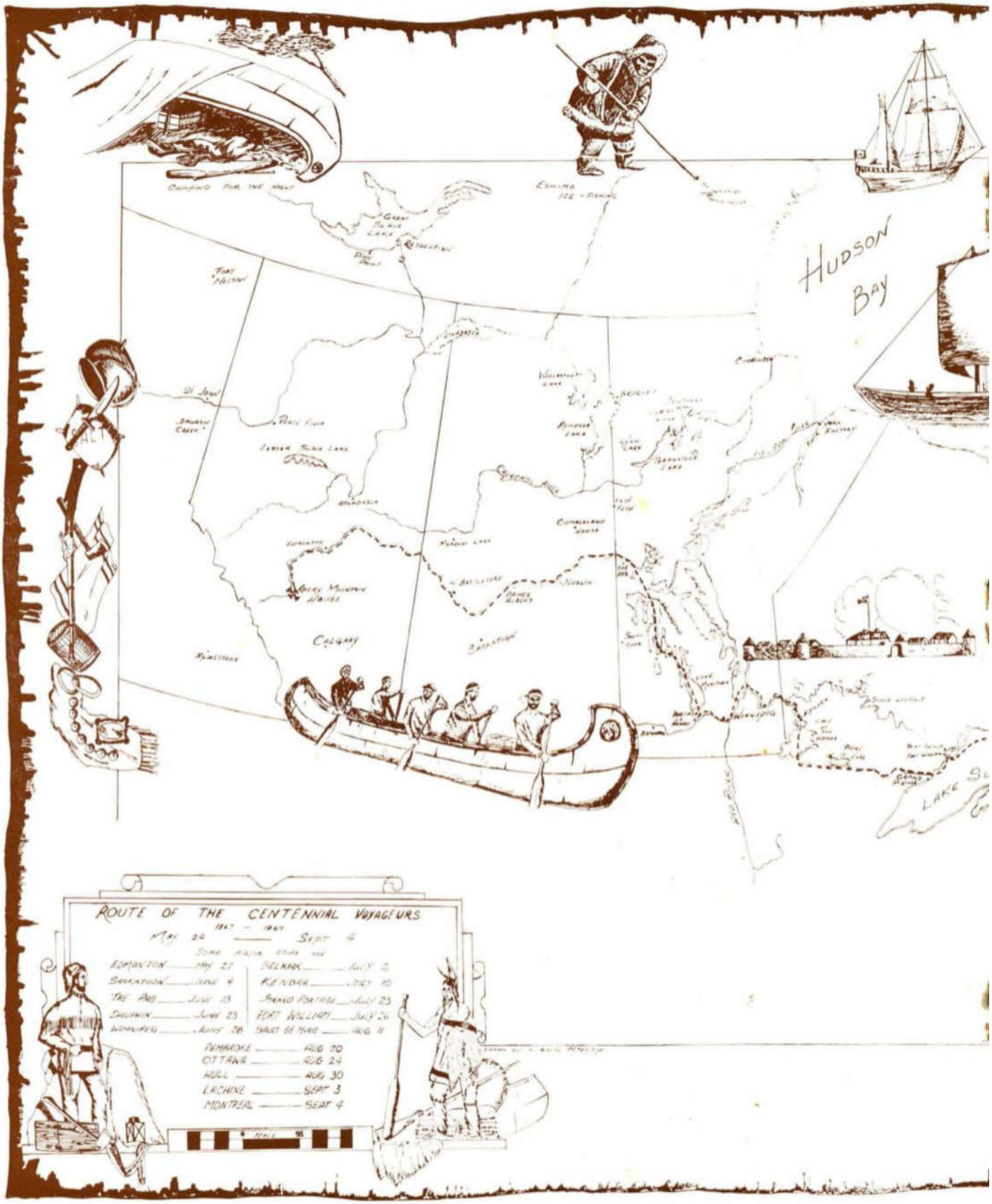
An American party consisting of H. S. Scudder a naturalist, who wrote the account, and two astronomers travelling to view an eclipse in 1860 were outfitted at Lower Fort Garry:

The old North Canoe of Sir George Simpson was brought out, one of the largest birches ever constructed for use; it measured thirty-three feet in length, and in the middle was five feet three inches wide. It would carry seventeen men and their ordinary light luggage; but we had heavy baggage, and must provision for thirty-five days, so the voyageurs must be few in number, active, stalwart fellows. We had six in all.

The guide must be the first choice; and George Kippling, a half-breed Chippeway, was recommended for that service by the governor of the province, as "the best guide in the country". We looked him over, a fine, straight, honest-looking, wiry, sharp-featured fellow of about fifty-five years, with a short grizzly beard, and long black locks tinged with gray falling on his shoulders, and took him off-hand. He proved to be all that was said of him,—a tireless, wonderful fellow, of intense energy and devotion, on the watch for every opportunity to push on (yet inspiring confidence by his caution), obliging, full of thought for our comfort, and of abounding good-nature and merriment. With his broad, flat, pan-cake like Scotch cap set jauntily on one side of his head, a red flannel shirt, and a pair of trousers shaped like a long bag, with very short legs, I can see him now, as he half-sits, half-stands, at the stern, his large sweep paddle incessantly in motion on one side or the other even while the men rest, keeping them in good-humor when their spirits flag by his sly remarks or bantering. We engaged him for £6 10s. for the trip.

Gabriel Franchere, fur trader, canoeing from Rocky Mountain House to Montreal on returning from the Pacific coast, in June 1814:

On the 11th, after breakfasting at Fort Vermilion [on the Saskatchewan] we resumed our journey, with six or seven pounds of tallow for our whole stock of food. This slender supply brought us through to the evening of the third day, when we had for supper two ounces of tallow each. On the 14th, in the morning, we killed a wild goose, and toward midday, collected some flag-root and *choux-gras*, a wild herb, which we boiled with the small game: we did not forget to throw into the pot the little tallow we had left, and made a delicious repast. Toward the decline of day, we had the good luck to kill a buffalo.


HUDSON BAY
CALGARY
ROUTE OF THE CENTENNIAL VOYAGEURS
1967 — 1967
May 24 — Sept 4
EDMONTON — May 27
SASKATOON — June 4
THE PAS — June 13
DAUPHIN — June 25
WINNIPEG — June 28
SELKIRK — July 2
KENORA — July 10
GRAND PORTAGE — July 23
FORT WILLIAM — July 26
SAULT STE MARIE — Aug 11
PEMBROKE — Aug 20
OTTAWA — Aug 24
HULL — Aug 30
LACHINE — Sept 3
MONTREAL — Sept 4

IN OTHER DAYS

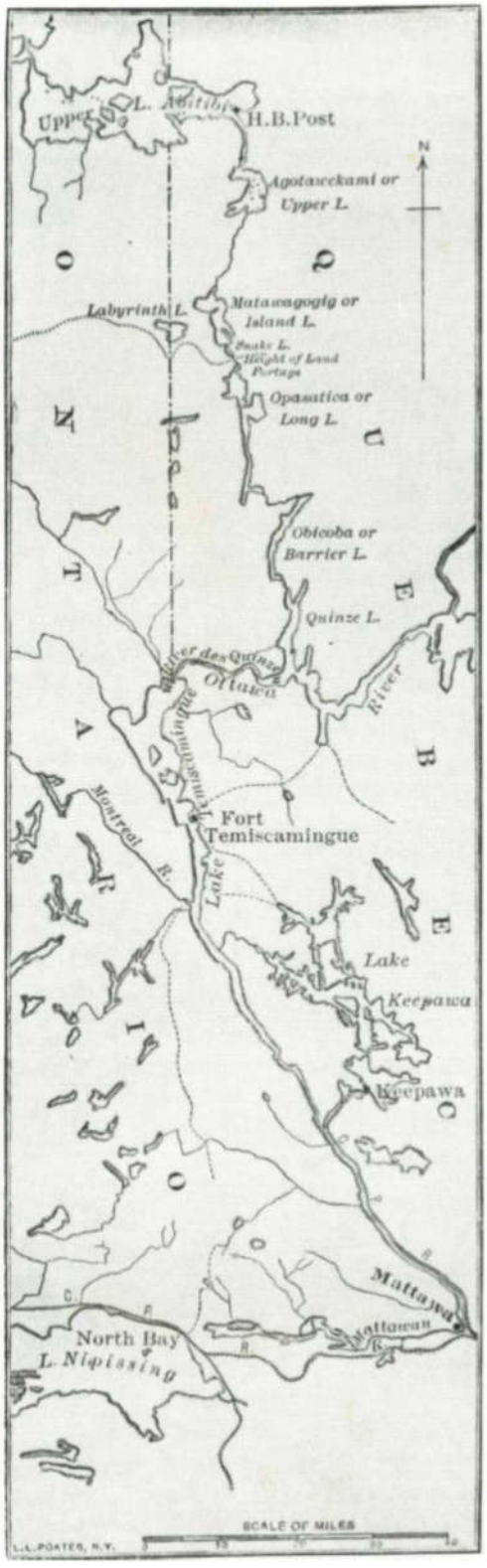
Nicholas Garry, a director of the H B C, on the Ottawa River, June 1821:

At 3 o'clock we found ourselves in the Canoe. On starting one of those unpleasant Accidents occurred which render Canoe travelling so dangerous. Just on starting our Canoe ran against a Rock. The grating Sensation is really very much like, and can only be compared to, your Feeling when under the hands of an unskilful Dentist. We found we were not making water which is the certain Criterion that the Bottom was not hurt. On such an Accident occurring every body remains quiet, confusion would upset the Canoe. If the Canoe makes Water every Nerve is strained to paddle to the Shore. If she fills then it becomes "Sauve qui peut," but the wisest way is to stick to the Canoe which never quite sinks.

[Garry suffered other discomforts] . . . Never had a poor unfortunate Traveller passed so wretched a Night. Tired and worn out by the Fatigues and Miseries of the Day we landed, hoping to find Rest and Relief to our Sufferings. Our Camp however was so close to the water side that my Head almost touched the River. In the Night we were not only pestered by the Attack of Musquito and Sandfly, but some little irritating insect, not visible, which ran over the whole Body and produced a Degree of Irritation and Misery Not to be described. I was happy in the Call to embark.

Paul Kane the artist also had something to say about an accident in 1846 near Sault Ste. Marie:

Having in this part of the river a considerable fall, for about a mile and a half in length, it soon becomes a foaming torrent, down which, however, canoes, steered by practised guides, ordinarily descend safely, although with terrific violence. Sometimes, indeed, the venture is fatal to the bark and its occupants. A short time before our arrival on the present occasion, a canoe, in running down the rapid, had struck upon a sunken rock that made a hole through her bottom. She instantly filled, but, owing to the extreme buoyancy of the birch-bark these canoes are made of, the men, by balancing themselves adroitly in her, and squatting up to their necks in the water, thereby lessening their weight materially, were enabled to steer her with safety down the foaming billows, and run her on the shore in an eddy at the foot of the rapids. ◆



THE ABITIBI FUR BRIGADE

A first-hand account of travel with a canoe brigade, excerpted and introduced by Nancy L. Woolworth.

In 1901 the young Canadian illustrator, Arthur Heming, and his sister Kate, made their way to the remote Hudson's Bay Company fur trade post on Upper Lake Abitibi. Lake Abitibi lies across the boundary between Ontario and Quebec, about halfway between the confluence of the Ottawa and Mattawa Rivers (where the Ottawa turns north) and Moose Factory on James Bay. When they returned with the fur brigade Heming wrote a narrative and drew illustrations which captured the adventure, drama, and colour of the shipment of furs between the Abitibi and Lake Timiskaming posts.

The first Hudson's Bay Company post in the Abitibi region was established in 1784. De Troyes had built a fort on the lake in 1686 and subsequently traders from Canada and a North West Company post threatened the business of Moose Factory. The H B C post on the lake was set up in 1794. This lay north of the height of land and furs were shipped down to Moose Factory. Timiskaming House, some 117 miles south, was taken over from the North West Company on the amalgamation in 1821. Its main trade route was along the Ottawa River from Montreal though before 1865 rather unsuccessful efforts were made to establish a route to and from Moose Factory.

In the 1870s Timiskaming House became headquarters for the Abitibi as well as the Timiskaming Districts and remained so until superseded by Mattawa in 1883. By that time Mattawa was served by the Canadian Pacific Railway and it functioned as a Company depot for the northerly posts. By the beginning of the twentieth century a steamboat carried furs and supplies between Timiskaming and Mattawa.

Between Abitibi and Timiskaming the route of the voyageurs lay through wilderness lakes and rivers little known to the rest of the world. Heming had been commissioned by *Scribner's Magazine* to depict the voyage. The brigade that headed south from Abitibi that summer sixty-six years ago numbered seven large canoes. Accompanying them in a smaller North canoe were Heming and his sister.

Before his death in 1940 Arthur Heming achieved wide renown for his art work and his writing. Here, slightly condensed, is his story of the Abitibi brigade, with his own illustrations.

* * *

BY ARTHUR HEMING

DIP, SWIRL, THUD; dip, swirl, thud sound all the paddles together. The time is faultless. Now it is that this picturesque brigade appears in wild perfection. As the canoes range side by side, their gracefully curved bows come in line, and instantly a race is on for the portage. Like contending chargers, forward they bound at every stroke. Vigorously the voyageurs ply their paddles. Stiffening their arms and curving their backs, they bend the blades. Every muscle is strained. The sharp bows cleave the lumpy water, sending it gurgling to the paddles that slash it, and whirl it aside. On they go.

Now the factor's canoe is gaining. As that gaudily painted craft gradually forges ahead, its swift-running wake creeps steadily along the sides of the other canoes. The pace is too exhausting; the canoes string out; but still the narrow blades slash away, for the portage is at hand. With dangerous speed the first canoe rushes abreast of the landing; and just as one expects disaster, the bowman gives the word. Instantly the crew, with their utmost strength, back water.

As the canoe comes to a standstill, the voyageurs roll their paddle-handles along the gunwales, twirling the dripping blades and enveloping the canoe in a veil of whirling spray. Then, jumping into the shallow water, they line up and quickly pass the packs ashore. The moment the cargo is transferred to the bank, the crew lift the great canoe off the water and turn it bottom up, while four of them place their heads beneath and rest the gunwales upon their capot-bepadded shoulders.

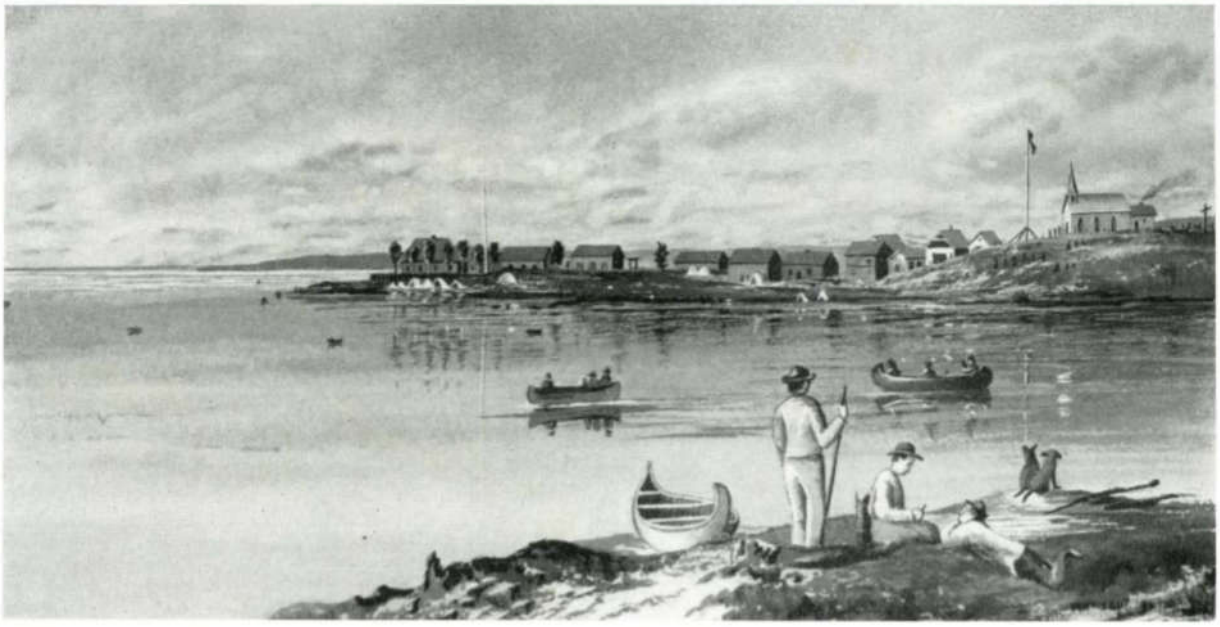
As they carry it off, one is reminded of some immense antediluvian reptile crawling slowly over the portage trail. There is now much excitement. Other crews arrive, and are rapidly unloading. As the landing is over-crowded, the portaging begins. Each man ties the end of his tump-line about a pack, swings it upon his back, and bending forward, rests its broad loop against his forehead. Upon the first his companion places two more packs; then, stooping beneath the weight of 240 pounds, the packers at a jog-trot set off uphill and down; over rugged rocks and fallen timber; through fern-covered marsh and dense underbrush. Coming to an opening in the wood, on the bank of another lake, they quickly toss their burdens aside, and back again they run.

Nowhere can you see more willing workers. You hear no swearing or grumbling about the exceedingly hard task before them. On the contrary, every man vies with the rest as to which shall carry the greatest load and most swiftly cross the portage. One crew races with another. Shirts and trousers reek with perspiration. The Indians puff and pant as they go by, and no wonder—the portage is three-quarters of a mile in length.

One morning in June silvery birch-leaves fluttered in a gentle breeze. Rippling waters lapped the sandy beach. Moose and caribou came down to drink. Bear and otter fished in the creek. Distant shores rose out of the fading gloom. Over the lake came the cry of a loon. Between the tops of the tamaracks a golden bar appeared. Rising and spreading rapidly, it burst into a flood of glorious sunlight.

High above the rising mist, floating in ghostly shapes along the shore, flaunted the tattered flag of the "Great Trader". A point edged with boulders jutted into the lake. At the outer end, in a cluster of poplars, stood the "House of Abitibi". Behind it ranged the massive,

One is reminded of some immense antediluvian reptile crawling slowly over the portage trail.



Abitibi House, from a painting by C. A. M. Paradis, probably 1887. PUBLIC ARCHIVES

weather-beaten store-houses, wherein the business of the post goes on. Next, a number of small log cabins, where the half-breeds lived. Then, a village of teepees, in which the families of Indian hunters spend midsummer. Crowning a knoll in the rear stood a quaint little Roman church [a mission was begun in 1843 by Jesuit priests] with a small tin spire glistening in the sun, and capped by a cross that spread its tiny arms to heaven. On the hill in the background the time-worn pines swayed their shaggy heads and softly whispered to that, the first gentle touch of civilization in the wilderness.

As the day grew older, unusual spirit enlivened the scene. Many dusky figures moved among the tents and buildings. The "factor" of the post joined the throng. A veteran voyageur touched his hat, and the two conversed together. Presently the old guide waved the swarthy men into line. From them he picked the bowman; and, in turn, each bowman selected a man for his crew; until, for each of the seven canoes, eight men were chosen. At the tolling of a bell the men dispersed, moving off to the little chapel on the hill, where Père Dozier offered a farewell prayer.

Again the crews assembled, and the work began. Some went to the canoehouse, where the tiers of the great six-fathom . . . canoes lined the walls. Shouldering these beautiful birchen craft, the Indians carried them down to the landing. Others went off, with "tump-line" in hand, to the warehouse. Ascending the massive stairs they entered the "fur-loft". Tiers of empty shelves circled the room, where the furs were stored during the winter. But upon the floor were stacked packs of valuable pelts. The old-fashioned scales, the collapsible mould, and the giant fur-press told of the work that had been done.

Every pack weighed eighty pounds. Its canvas wrapper hid the skins of beaver, otter, fisher, cross-fox, marten, red-fox, mink, silver-fox, ermine, skunk, musquash, raccoon, wolf, or wolverine. Loading up, they rapidly carried the fur to the landing. In the store room the voyageurs gathered up the "tripping" kit of paddles, tents, axes, tarpaulins, sponges; and a box for each crew containing frying-pans, tea-pails, tin plates, and tea-dishes. In the trading-room the crews were supplied with provisions of flour, pork, tea, and tobacco, at the rate of three pounds (provisions) a day for each man. Most of the voyageurs received "advances" from the clerk, in the way of clothing, knives, pipes, and things deemed essential for the "voyage". Birch bark, spruce roots, and "gum" were supplied for repairing the canoes.

All was now in readiness. The canoes were put upon the water, and paddled to the end of the wharf. The loading of freight began. Each canoe in turn gradually sank to within less than a foot of its gunwale, as its cargo was placed aboard. Soon every craft contained from two to three tons burden. The voyageurs indulged in much handshaking and a little quiet talking with the motley crowd. Then, paddle in hand, they boarded the canoes and took their places.

In manning a six-fathom or [a] "north" canoe the bowman (*avant*) is always the most important: the steersman (*gouvernail*) comes next in rank, while the others are called "midman" (middlemen or *milieux*).

The going and coming of the fur brigade was the one great event of the year to those nomadic people who stood watching the fast-vanishing flotilla.

Among the throng that watched the departure of the brigade was old Robuscan, chief of the Abitibi Indians,

who for more than nineteen years had carried his crippled wife upon his back. Even on his hunting trips he had carried her. As I stood watching the quaint pair, the old hunter leant well forward to stand the strain—for she weighed 250 pounds. His finely modelled face peered beneath the tump-line as his ponderous queen sat jauntily upon his back. As my sister bade her good-bye, her good-natured face beamed with satisfaction at the honour she was paid—with the exception of the relations of the company's factors, my sister was the first white woman seen at Abitibi. Our two half-breed voyageurs being in readiness, Kate and I took our places in our small birch-bark and paddled away in the wake of the big canoes.

Turning, I looked behind. The animated picture of the little settlement wherein we figured but a moment ago had faded into the distance. The wild-looking assembly was blotted from the shore. But, still, above the rapidly dwindling buildings, waved the flag of the oldest chartered trading association in the world—the Hudson's Bay Company.

After a while the wind died down, and the lake became one huge mirror. There was blue sky above and blue sky below. White clouds above and white clouds below. But through the centre of that mystical transformation the shore-line ran, and at it the hills and trees joined topsy-turvy—so perfect was the reflection.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock the brigade went ashore for a "snack". The canoes were snubbed to overhanging trees, and upon a rocky flat the fires burned. Hurriedly drinking the hot tea, the men seized pieces of frying pork and placing them upon their broken "bannock", ravenously devoured both as they returned to the canoes. No time was lost.

On entering the mouth of an apparently unnamed river the men worked incessantly for about two hours, or, in voyageur parlance, "one pipe"; then "spelled" and the paddles were laid aside one "smoke". As the way slackened the steersman bunched the canoes. The soft, rich voices of the crews blended as they quietly chatted and joked and laughed together.

In voyageurs parlance paddles were laid aside one 'pipe' or smoke.

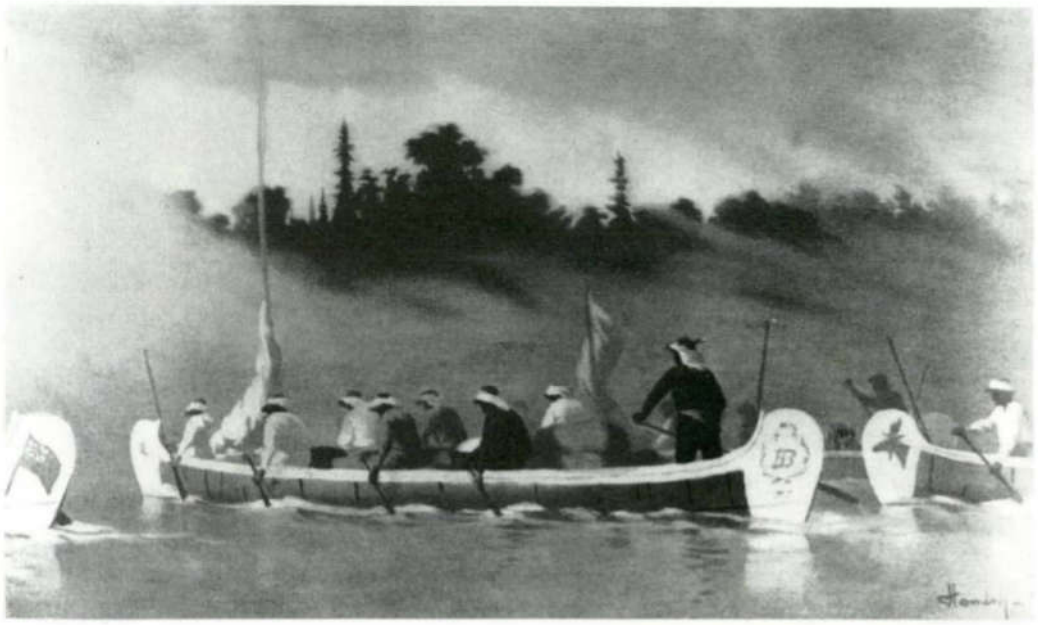
Robuscan's ponderous queen sat jauntily upon his back.

When we reached Dancing Rapids, the *moonyasses* (greenhorns) of the brigade celebrated their first voyage by dancing upon the portage. About three miles above the portage we entered Lake Agotawekami, which is enclosed by high, rocky, well-timbered shores, and whose surface is dotted with islands of various sizes.

Then a stern wind came along. Nearing an island, some of the men went ashore and cut a mast and sprit-sail boom for each canoe. They lashed the masts to the thwarts with tump-lines, and rigged the tarpaulins used to cover the packs into sails.

Again the paddles were shipped, save those of the steersman; and the crews lounged about, either smoking or drowsing. The men were weary. Last night they had danced, both hard and long—as all true voyageurs do on the eve of their departure.

To voyageurs stern winds are blessings. Mile after mile the wild flotilla swept along. Sunshine danced upon the rippling waves that gurgled and lapped as the bows overreached them. Rugged islands of moss-covered rock and evergreen trees arose on every side. The wind favoured us for about five miles, then shifted.



Paddling up the mist-shrouded river . . .

Reluctantly the sails were let down, and masts and booms tossed overboard. At four in the afternoon the brigade landed on a pretty island, and another hurried "tea" was taken.

At sundown the brigades pitched camp for the night. The canoes were unloaded. The fur-packs were neatly piled and covered with tarpaulins. The canoes were lifted ashore. Tents were erected and camp-fires lit. Upon a thick carpet of balsam brush, the blankets were spread in the tents. The tired men sat in the smoke of the fires and ate their suppers, round which black flies and mosquitos hovered. Later, a cool sunset breeze from over the water blew the tormentors away, and then it was that those swarthy men enjoyed a well-earned rest.

After supper some made bannock batter in the mouths of floursacks, adding water, salt and baking powder. This they worked into balls and spread out into the sizzling pans arranged obliquely before the fire, with a bed of coals at the back of each. It was an enlivening scene. Great roaring fires sent glowing sparks high into the still night air, lighting up the trees with their intense glare, and casting weird shadows upon the surrounding tents and bushes. Picturesque wild-looking men, laughed, talked, and gesticulated at one another. A few with *capotes* [hooded blanket or duffel coats] off were squatting close to the fires, and flipping into the air the browning flap-jacks that were to be eaten the following day. Others, hoods over their heads, lolled back from the fire smoking their pipes. Some held their moccasins before the fire to dry, or arranged their blankets for turning in. Others slipped away under the cover of darkness to rub pork rinds on the bottom of their canoe, for there was much rivalry as to the speed of the crews.

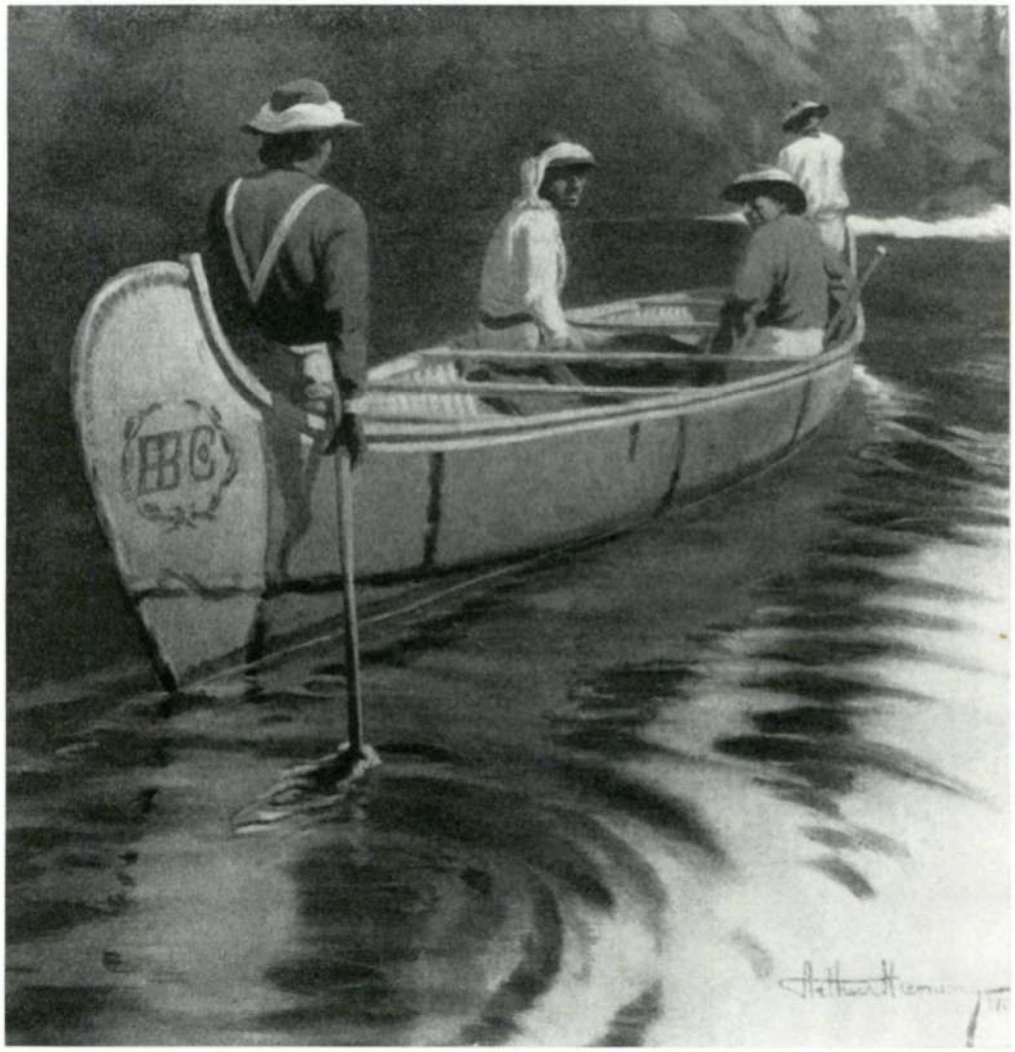
At three in the morning the camp was astir. In the half light of the early day, and while breakfast was being prepared, the men "gummed" afresh the big canoes. Whittling handles to dry pinesticks, they split the butts half-way down, and placed that end in the fire. After a little burning, the stick opened like a fork; and placing it over the broken seam, the voyageur blew upon the crotch, thus melting the hardened "gum"; then spitting upon his palm, he rounded it off and smoothed it down. By the time breakfast was ready the tents were again stowed away in the canoes along with the cargoes.

Paddling up the mist-shrouded river the canoes rounded a bend. There the eddying of muddy water told that a moose had just left a water-lily bed. The leaves of the forest hid his fleeing form; but, on the soft bank the water slowly trickled into his deep hoof-prints, so late was his departure. The tracks of bear and deer continuously marked the shores, for the woods were full of game. From the rushes startled ducks rose up and whirled away, and on rotten logs partridges drummed.

During the day the brigade made three portages and entered Lake Matawagogig, which is flanked by the Laurentian Mountains. It is full of islands, in beauty surpassing those of the St. Lawrence River and of the far-famed Lakes of Muskoka. Another portage, and a short paddle up Snake River—so called for its winding course through a marshy region—and then we made the

Flipping into the air the browning bannock.

They cut a mast for each canoe and rigged the tarpaulins used to cover the packs into sails.



The bowman stood up and scanned the river . . . dark ominous water raced ahead then disappeared in a surging mass of white. . . .

three-quarters-of-a-mile portage over the height of land, and commenced our descent to Lake Temiscamingue [or Timiskaming]. After traversing Long Lake, Barrier Lake, and Quinze Lake we entered, on the morning of the fourth day, that wildest of streams, the River des Quinze—which is only another name for a short section of the Upper Ottawa River. There a series of fifteen portages in fifteen miles made progress slow. It was on that stretch of the trip that the skill of the voyageur was tested most. Endless rapids and cataracts dammed the river, and down many of them the canoes were run. The packs were portaged over land, and the canoes, manned with only four men, were run through the rapids.

At the head of one of the great rapids a bowman, seeing that I mated well with a light-weight of his crew, invited me to take a paddle and help him through. While the brigade was shooting the rapids, light-weights are at a premium. Tossing in an extra set of paddles we stepped aboard, and with a gentle shove the current caught us and carried us out to mid-stream. Long before we sighted white water the roar of the cataract was humming in our ears. We two midmen sat upon dunnage sacks and braced our moccasined feet against the ribbing. Presently the bowman stood up and scanned the river. Dark, ominous water raced ahead for a hundred yards, then disappeared, leaving nothing but a great surging mass of white that leaped high and dropped out of sight in the apparently forsaken river bed. Then the steersman stood up, too, and Indian words passed between them.

Every moment we were gaining impetus, and always heading for the highest crest of foam. Waiting for the word to paddle was even worse than waiting for the starter's gun in a sculling race. At last it came, just as we were twenty-five yards from the end of dark water. With a wild shout from the bowman, we drove our paddles home. The great canoe trembled a little at first as our work was somewhat ragged, but a moment later we settled into an even stroke and swept buoyantly among the tossing billows.

Now before us ran a strange, wild river of seething white, lashing among great, gray-capped, dark greenish boulders that blocked the way. High, rocky banks

standing close together, squeezed the mighty river into a tumult of fury. Swiftly we glide down the racing torrent and plunge through the boiling waters. Sharp rocks rear above the flying spray, while others are barely covered by the foaming flood. It is dangerous work. We midmen paddle hard to force the canoe ahead of the current. The men in bow and stern ply and bend their great seven-foot paddles. The bowman with eyes alert keenly watches the whirling waters. The steersman closely watches and follows every move his companion makes. Down we go, riding upon the very back of the river; for here the water forms a great ridge, rising four or five feet above the water-line on either shore. To swerve to either side means sure destruction. With terrific speed we reach the brink of a violent descent.

For a moment the canoe pauses, steadies herself, then dips her head as the stern upheaves, and down we plunge among more rocks than ever. Right in our path the angry stream is waging battle with a hoary boulder that disputes the way. With all its might and fury the frantic river hisses and roars and lashes it. Yet it never moves—it only frowns destruction upon all that dares approach it. How the bowman is working! See his paddle bend! With lightning movements he jabs his great paddle deep into the water and close under the left side of the bow; then with a mighty heave he lifts her head around. The great canoe swings as though upon a pivot; for is not the steersman doing exactly the very opposite at this precise moment? We sheer off.

But the next instant the paddles are working on the opposite sides, for the bowman sees signs of a water-covered rock not three yards from the very bow. With a wild lunge he strives to lift the bow around; but the paddle snaps like a rotten twig. Instantly he grabs for another, and a grating sound runs the length of the heaving bottom. The next moment he is working the new paddle. A little water is coming in, but she is running true. The rocks now grow fewer, but still there is another pitch ahead. Again the bow dips as we rush down the incline. Spray rises in clouds that drench us to the skin, as we plunge through the "great swell" and then shoot out among a multitude of tumbling billows that threaten to engulf us. At last we leave their wild arena, and entering calmer water paddle away to the end of the portage trail.

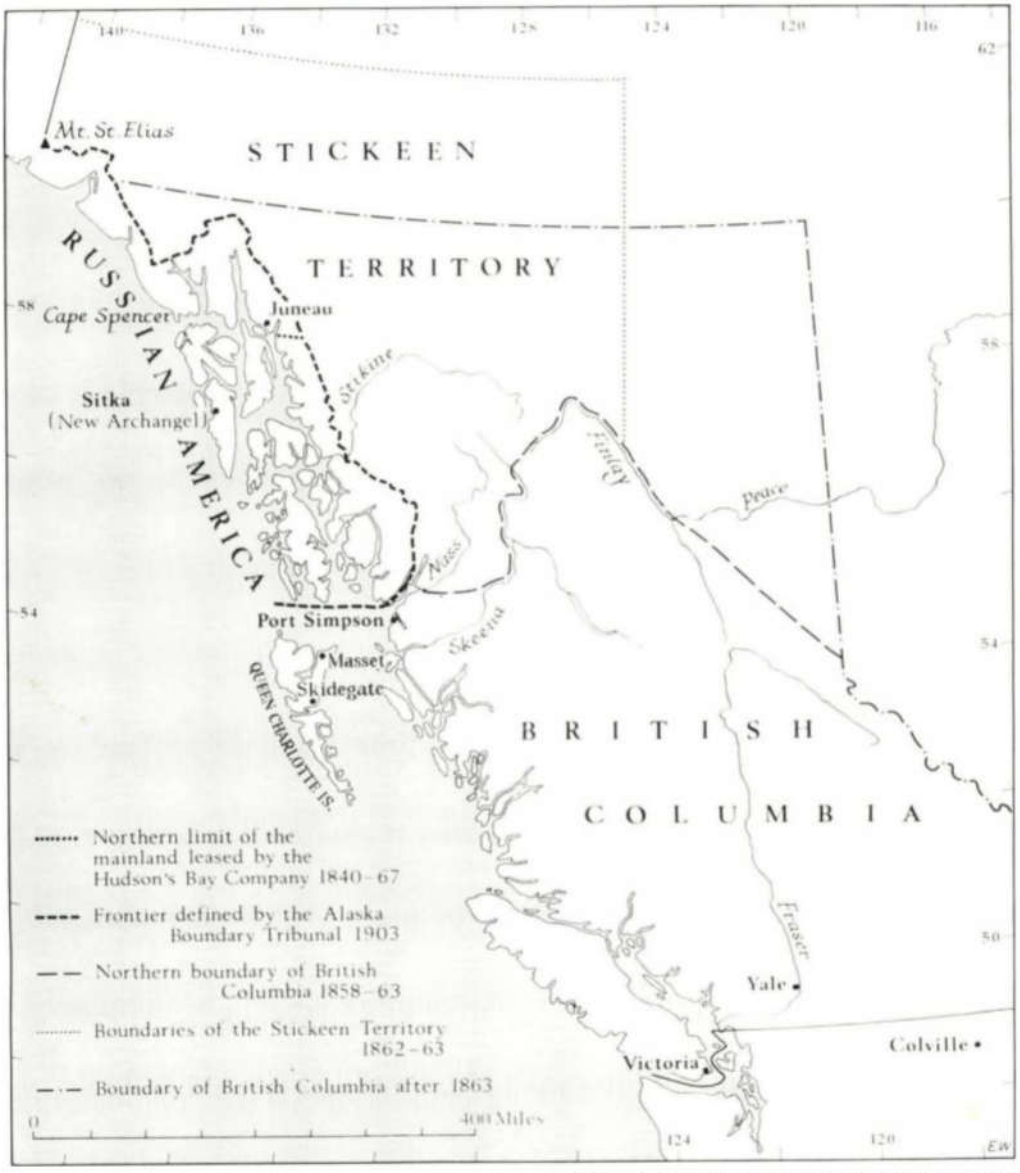
On the evening of the fourth day we camped upon the riverbank. Early next morning the whole brigade, togged out in their finest, swept rapidly down the river to meet the steamer at the head of Lake Temiscamingue. Thirty-eight thousand dollars' worth of furs were put aboard, and sent on their way by steamer and rail to Montreal. ◆

Spray rises in clouds as we plunge through the great swell.

"A Territory of Little Value"

THE WIND OF CHANGE ON THE NORTHWEST COAST 1861-67

by C. Ian Jackson



MAP COURTESY DRAWING OFFICE, LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

Dr Jackson is Lecturer in Geography at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Grateful acknowledgement is made to the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company for permission to quote from documents in the Company archives.

THE BOUNDARY between Canada and the Alaskan panhandle is one which caused frequent disagreements in the nineteenth century and, in Canada at least, constant dissatisfaction in the twentieth century. It was fixed in general terms in 1825, when the Russian American Company administered what is now Alaska, and the Hudson's Bay Company similarly ruled over the areas to the east. Not until 1903, however, was its position clearly defined in the controversial verdict of the Alaska Boundary Tribunal.

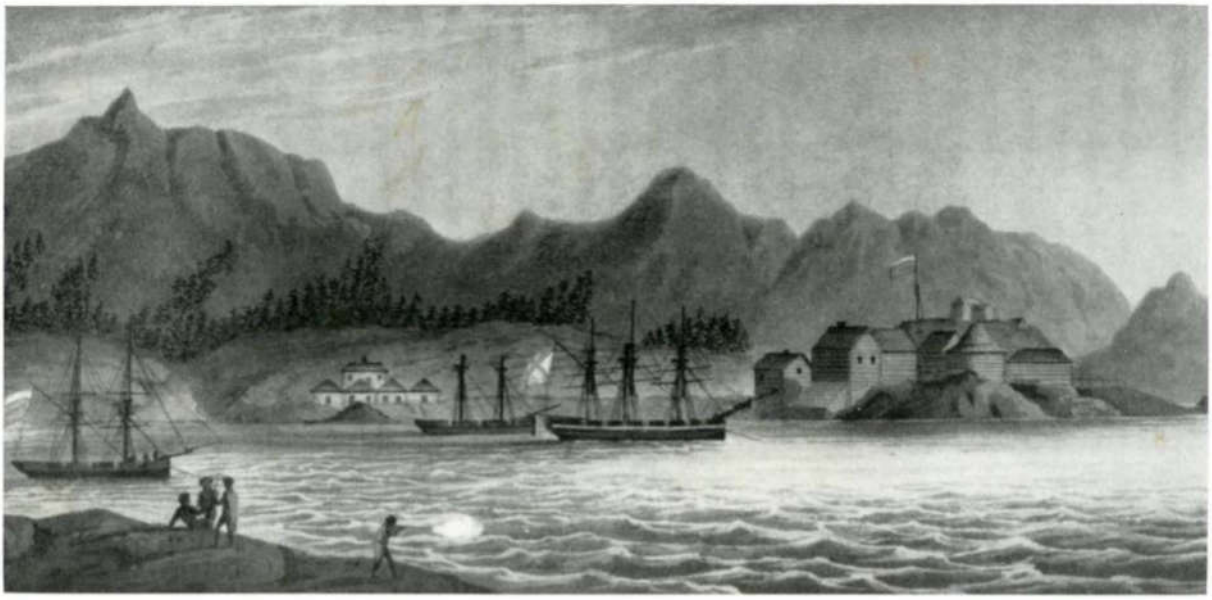
In the century and a half since the boundary was first agreed, there has only been one period when its existence was of little significance. Between 1838 and 1867 the Hudson's Bay Company leased the mainland of south-east Russian America, as far north as Cape Spencer, in return for an annual rent payable to the Russian American Company. This rent, initially 2,000 land otter skins annually, eventually became a money payment of £1,500 a year. During these three decades the Hudson's Bay Company at first maintained trading posts in the area and then sent trading ships on annual cruises along the coast. Occasional disagreements occurred between the two companies, chiefly over competition from American petty traders or accusations of illicit liquor trading, but for most of the period the arrangement was convenient to both sides. The Russians retained control of the islands along the coast, and Russian America continued to be administered from the small settlement of New Archangel (Sitka) on Baranof Island. The site of Juneau, the present Alaskan capital, is just outside the area leased by the Hudson's Bay Company. The leased area was often referred to as the Stikine Territory, after the principal river which flowed through it. It had a longer life than the other Stickeen Territory. The latter area, east of the Russian panhandle, formed part of neither Rupert's Land nor the original British Columbia. It was organized as the Stickeen Territory in 1862 but a year later the Territory was dissolved and most of it was incorporated in British Columbia.

As time passed, the tranquil circumstances of the early part of the lease slowly changed. The North Pacific became less of a backwater and both Russian and British companies found increasingly that their activities were being affected by others. During the Crimean War, the remoteness—almost irrelevance—of the Northwest Coast enabled the Companies to continue their activities protected by a neutrality agreement. The threat which developed later was not political or military, but commercial. As such, it was more serious; the gradual increase of settlement, prospecting and trade could not be solved by international agreement. The Hudson's Bay Company's Western Department headquarters at Victoria became less a fur-trading post and more a prototype of the modern store. After the Company's trade monopoly expired in 1858 this process accelerated and "A quiet community was transformed into a bustling city". The correspondence between Victoria and Hudson's Bay House in London, using faster routes year by year, became very large in volume and was dominated by problems of land sales, disputes and all the characteristics of a growing town and colony.

Farther north, the activities of American traders were not inhibited by the monopolies granted by either Russia or Britain to their chartered companies. Here, as elsewhere in North America, change was inevitable and irreversible. Here too the period from 1860 to 1869 was crucial. The Civil War, the creation of the Dominion of Canada, the reorganization of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Deed of Surrender of its territories to Canada, the Alaska Purchase: all these events of lasting importance occurred within a few years of each other.

In the Stikine Territory, the first signs of change did not appear until 1861. The Hudson's Bay Company's lease had been renewed almost automatically for three years in 1859. A year or two later, however, the first petty traders penetrated the area. In 1861, one such vessel called at Victoria on its return journey and the Hudson's Bay Company, following its practice elsewhere, bought the furs from the traders. The argument was that once the furs had been traded by the Indians, it was better that the Company should acquire them and retain control of their disposal rather than allow a market to develop in the United States or elsewhere. The London Committee of the Company reported the event to the Russian American Company in St Petersburg, and asked that the Russians should stop this invasion of its monopoly.

The Russians, however, were in no position to take such measures; they had problems enough of their own. To begin with, the Russian government was losing interest in its American colonies, which were expensive to maintain and insignificant in terms of population. Already a few tentative approaches had been made about the possibility of a purchase by the United States. The Civil War put a temporary stop to this idea, but when the Russian American Company's charter expired at the end of 1861, it was afterwards renewed only on an annual basis. Secondly, the method of accounting used by the Russian company did not help it to appear successful. Against the considerable profits from the fur trade were set all the costs of administering the colonies, leaving a net loss. The company's tea trade monopoly, the other side of its activities, bore no such burdens and appeared thriving by comparison. Finally, the Russian company was itself experiencing competition from American



B.C. ARCHIVES

Sitka or New Archangel in 1805; the Russian headquarters that had recently been rebuilt.

traders and hunters. When therefore it said in its reply to the Hudson's Bay Company that it had "neither power nor means to enforce" the monopoly, this was no more than the truth.

Such helplessness did not make the task of the Hudson's Bay Company any easier. Chief Factor Tolmie reported to London that the *Labouchere*, the Company's trading ship, had brought back diminished returns from the Northwest Coast in 1861, that competition and liquor trading on the coast was seriously injuring the trade and was likely to continue to do so: "In fair competition with the petty traders, we could succeed tolerably well, but as things are now the chances are greatly against us."

A further complication was the outbreak of the American Civil War. Late in 1861 it appeared that Great Britain might be drawn into the conflict, weakening the Company's position on the remote northwest coast still further. One of the few hopeful reports at this time came from Chief Factor Dugald Mactavish, at the end of a long tour of the posts in the interior of the Western Department. Even he preserved a Scottish caution in his optimism:

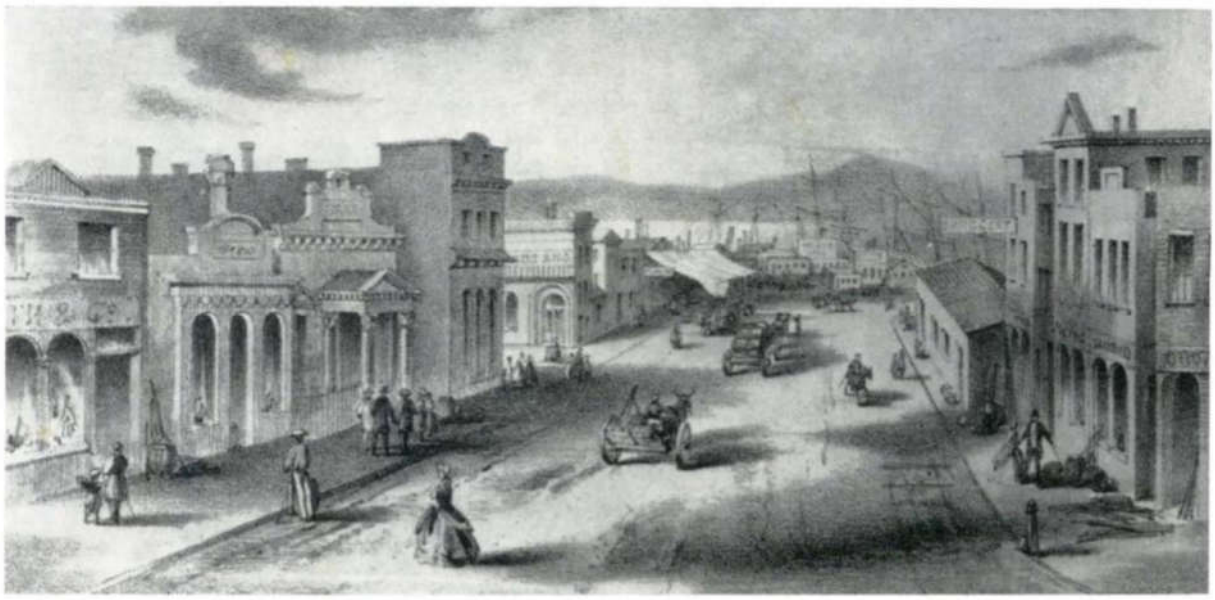
> . . . under vigorous and energetic management, I see no reason to despair about the Company's posts in the interior of British Columbia and Colvile. On the contrary I believe there is much reason to hope—that the business generally will hold together for some time—but if our people are to keep constantly looking back for the old days to return—and in place of working and striving are to content themselves with doing nothing—and waiting for business to come to them—then things must go from bad to worse—and we will soon see the end of our tether.

Mactavish had earlier expressed even more guarded hopes about the prospects in the Stikine Territory, but trade in 1861 did not seem to bear out his faith. Alexander Grant Dallas, who had recently visited Victoria, summed up his own perplexity while on holiday at Nairn in Scotland:

> I am very doubtful as to the benefit to be derived from a renewal of the Russian lease, but do not feel sufficiently assured to recommend its being given up.

Faced with this lack of definite advice, the London Committee had to make its own decision. In the early part of 1862 it agreed to an eighteen-month extension of the lease until mid-1863 so as to give the confused situation time to settle down. By April 1862, however, the Committee had decided that "looking back to the old days to return and . . . doing nothing" was, literally, profitless. The Committee therefore decided not to renew the Stikine lease in 1863. One other consideration may have influenced its decision. Dallas had reminded the Committee that the right to free navigation in the Stikine Territory was included in the provisions of the Russian-British Convention of 1825. Since by the '60s the Hudson's Bay Company already depended only on the *Labouchere* for its trade in the area, could not this pattern be continued, without paying £1,500 for a "monopoly" of the trade which the Russians were powerless to guarantee?

When this decision was received in St Petersburg, it caused the directors of the Russian American Company to try anxiously to persuade their English colleagues to change their mind. At first the latter stood firm, bluntly reminding the Russian Company of its own inability to guarantee the conditions of the lease. Soon afterwards, however, the prospects for trade improved and the English company had second thoughts. 1861 turned out to



PUBLIC ARCHIVES

A street in Victoria in 1860, leading to the harbour (the present Yates Street).

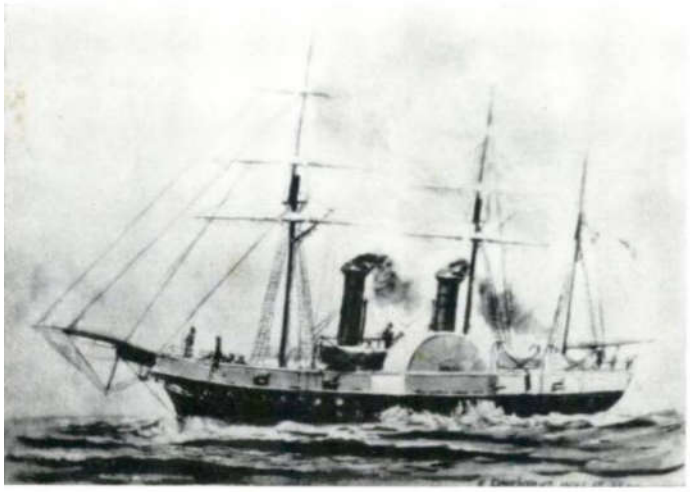
have been the low point of the Company's fortunes in the Stikine Territory. Trading conditions in 1862 were much better, requiring a second voyage of the *Labouchere* and even 1861 turned out in the accounts to have been rather better in the Stikine Territory than elsewhere in the Western Department, the thriving Sale Shop at Victoria always excluded. The London Committee hastily changed its mind and the Russians were glad to accept the offer of a renewal of the lease for two years, to mid-1865.

When the lease came up yet again for renewal, much more time was given to its negotiation. The Russian American Company proposed to send an agent to London to discuss the matter in the fall of 1864. This did not prove practicable; apparently most members of the London Committee were drawn away from the capital at that season by the attractions of the grouse moors, but the visit did take place in January 1865. Since the previous renewal the Hudson's Bay Company had been taken over by the International Financial Society and commercial considerations were probably even more to the fore than they had been previously. The Russian American Company's agent, A. Rutkovski, offered the London Committee a three-year lease, not merely of the Stikine Territory but of the whole of the panhandle of Russian America, mainland and islands, south of Mount St Elias. The Russians were to retain only their settlement at Sitka and the profitable ice trade with Cailfornia which they carried on from there. For this lease the Hudson's Bay Company was asked a rent double the previous one: £3,000 a year.

This proposal must have come as a surprise to the members of the London Committee who were probably more concerned to get either better protection or a reduction in rent for the lease of the existing area. Rather arbitrarily they offered £2,000 for the enlarged lease, but Rutkovski did not have power to accept this and could only refer the Company to St Petersburg.

The Hudson's Bay Company wrote to its Russian counterpart to confirm this offer, but prudently also sought the advice of its servants in North America. The first reply received in London was from Dugald Mactavish, at this time in Quebec. He was firmly of the opinion that not only was the Russian American Company's price too high, but the London Committee was also too generous in offering £2,000 a year. Much more interesting to the modern reader was the reply from Chief Factor Tolmie in Victoria. Tolmie's views were similar to those of Mactavish, but he also took the opportunity to develop his own ideas about the future of the Northwest

The steamer "Labouchere" operated on the coast from 1859 until she foundered in 1866. VANCOUVER CITY ARCHIVES



Coast. Few of his suggestions proved practicable but in the context of the time they were enlightened and far-seeing; their lack of success was not due to any fault in his thinking.

Tolmie began by pointing out that the new lease again provided no guarantee of a trade monopoly for the Hudson's Bay Company. Quite apart from direct competition in the fur trade, the Russian coast was popular for cod fishermen and in addition it seemed likely that considerable supplies would have to be taken north to support the construction of the Overland Telegraph between the United States and Russia. As always, where there were intruders, there was a threat to the fur trade.

Further, although the Company had no direct knowledge of the area, the extension of coast from Cape Spencer to Mount St Elias held few attractions. Tolmie found it embarrassing to report that such information as he had came from "one of the most respectable and trustworthy of the petty traders who has recently gone out of the fur business". When this trader had gone ". . . along the coast as far north as Lawrence Island close to Behring's Straits, he saw between Cape Spencer and Mt. St. Elias only a few wretchedly poor Indians without furs."

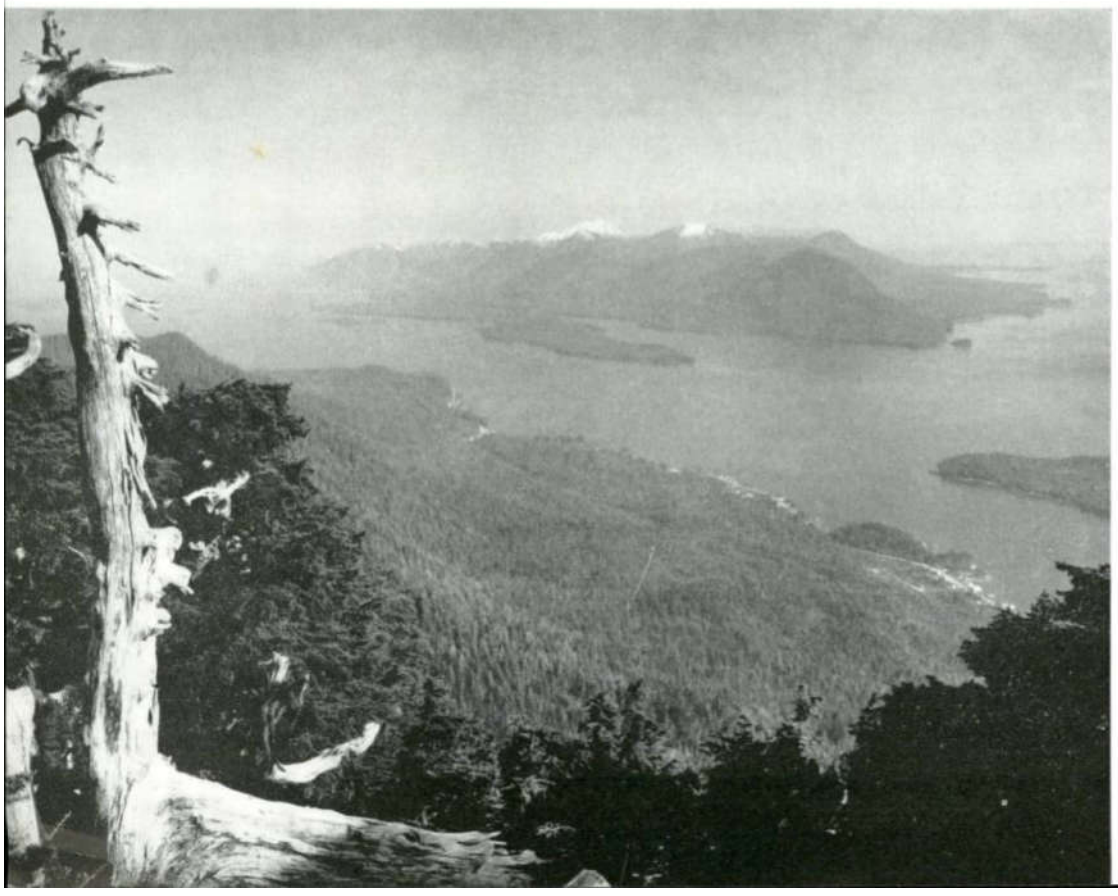
Tolmie apparently regarded his informant as in the category of a 'retired burglar' but "his character is vouched for by persons here with whom he has dealt for years".

Tolmie's alternative to the enlarged lease was based on his belief, shared by Dallas, that the British had freedom of navigation in the area, independent of the lease. Crucial to the future of the trade was the fact that the Stikine River was navigable for "light draught stern-wheel steamers" for 130 to 180 miles from the sea. This would carry the head of navigation well into British Columbia. The value of the Stikine lease had always been that it provided the Hudson's Bay Company with ready access to the furs of the interior, through Indian middlemen. The furs produced in the Stikine Territory itself were relatively unimportant. If the Hudson's Bay Company could establish one or more trading posts on the Stikine and on the Skeena and Nass farther south, they could be served by river steamers and the lease would be unnecessary. Apart from the Russians, the only losers in this arrangement would be the Indians along the coast who would no longer be needed as middlemen and who "would for some time evince much jealousy of white traders opposing them inland."

A further factor in this situation which was of great importance was the Overland Telegraph. The route for this was being surveyed, and it seemed likely that it would run for most of its length in British Columbia (still referred to as New Caledonia by Tolmie) rather than through the panhandle. As such the route was both a threat and an opportunity to the Company.

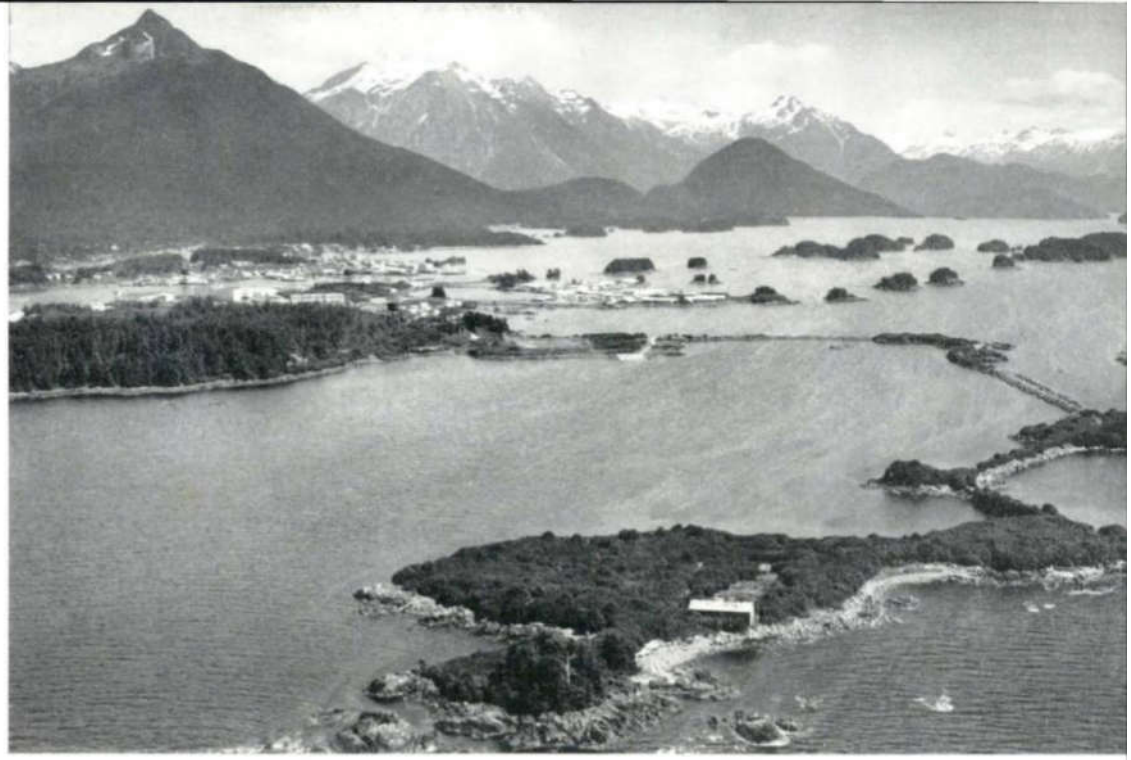
The telegraph line was a threat in that it increased the probability of interference in the fur trade. To enable the line to be maintained, some road would be necessary along its length and:

> in this respect it must be held in view, that the good packtrail or perhaps sleigh-road which the Telegraph Company will



The inside passage between coast and islands, near the southern boundary of Alaska.

BOB AND IRA SPRING



Part of modern Sitka on the west shore of Baranoff Island.

BOB AND IRA SPRING

have to open along the line and directly, or through our Company, to retain in travelable condition, will afford facilities to freetraders to engage in the fur trade in these remote parts.

Indeed, the telegraph company itself might contribute to this:

[the] company had established a rule forbidding its employes from trading furs, but this would prove a dead letter in reality.

The opportunity lay in the fact that the telegraph company seemed willing to entrust the maintenance of the line to the Hudson's Bay Company itself. Tolmie suggested that this might involve "our claiming reimbursement of all annual outlay on their behalf with a fair percentage thereon." This early example of a cost-plus contract, besides yielding a profit to the Company, would also enable the bases necessary for the maintenance of the line to be used as the trading posts already envisaged. There would then be no telegraph employees to interfere with the trade and the Company would be in a position to prevent the use of the access road by freetraders.

To complete the plan, Tolmie noted that the Company had for some time been considering a steamer service between Victoria and Yale on the Fraser River. He thought that three boats would be necessary, particularly in spring and autumn but during the summer the third boat

could be spared . . . for carrying goods up the Stikine, and as far as practicable up the Skeena and Nass. . . . The river boats have carried heavy cargo from Victoria to Stikine without accident, but it would be safer to have ours load at Fort Simpson, whence east, north or south there is inland navigation to the places named.

Compared to the rather empirical way in which the Hudson's Bay Company had managed its trade in recent years on the Northwest Coast, this plan of Tolmie's was a carefully thought out and comprehensive scheme for adapting the old pattern of the fur trade to new conditions. Unfortunately for him, despite the soundness of the plan none of it came to fruition. By the time Tolmie's letter was received in London an extension of the former lease was being negotiated. In July 1866 the transatlantic telegraph cable was successfully laid and work on the Overland Telegraph, on which some three million dollars had been spent, was abandoned. The following year Russian America was sold to the United States, the Hudson's Bay Company's lease ended, and its rights of free navigation were deemed to have ended also.

In one sense, however, Tolmie had the last word. In the same letter he noted that Rutkovski had mentioned a possible sale of the Stikine Territory to the Company. No one appears to have taken this very seriously at the time, but to Tolmie the idea was not only attractive but was already in his mind:

The strip of territory south of Mount St. Elias is clearly of little value nowadays to the Russian American Fur Company, or to Russia. For the preservation of international peace and good will it would be desirable that our Government purchased it from Russia as verbally proposed to me by Prince Maksutoff when last here. Should the British Government decline this offer which is made to the Company in the [Rutkovski's] memorandum, it might be tendered to and accepted by the United States to the engenderment perhaps of serious future complications.

Perhaps the time had already passed when the Company might have been willing to consider such a purchase, even when offered by the Governor of the Russian Colonies himself. But to the accuracy of Tolmie's prophecy there stands as testimony eighty years of Canadian dissatisfaction. ◆

ARGILLITE

by Robert W. Hobson

The writer, who is a corporal in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was stationed for some years on the Queen Charlotte Islands.

THERE ARE NOW two Indian villages on the Queen Charlotte Islands, once the territory of the great seafaring Haida people of the north Pacific. These settlements are Haida Village to the north at Masset and Skidegate Mission on the southeast coast of Graham Island near Queen Charlotte city. At these communities Haida craftsmen carve many objects from argillite which are sold to collectors and tourists. (See map page 40.)

The carving of argillite, sometimes called black slate (it is a compact argillaceous rock without the cleavage of slate), is an exclusively Haida art. It was soon after I was posted to the Queen Charlottes that I was introduced to argillite carving and later to Rufus Moody, a well-known carver from the picturesque village of Skidegate Mission.

Rufus Moody said the Haida people had been carving argillite since the early 1800s. At that time the Indian population was estimated to be about 8,000. Now it is nearer 1,200.

The earliest known examples of Haida argillite work date from about 1820, when history tells us the Haida Indians joined the ships of the Boston whalers and travelled back and forth across the Pacific Ocean. While at sea, we are told, the Haidas joined their shipmates in carving walrus tusks and whale teeth. On their return to the Charlotte Islands the Haida whalers continued with the art, but instead of bone and ivory, they began to use the fine grained slate from Slatechuck Mountain.

The earliest argillite carvings are treasured in museums and private collections around the world. It was a commercial art and the pieces, made for trade or gifts, consisted largely of ornate pipes, flutes, statuettes, and decorated bowls. In the collection of the Hudson's Bay Company is a pipehead acquired in 1822 by John Halkett, one of the directors who visited Canada.

An argillite pole in the H B C collection, about fifteen inches high. At the top Wasgo, the Haida sea monster, holds a whale in his teeth and another with his tail; below are two grizzly bears and the prostrate berry picker.

By 1870 the Haida carvers had adapted their own unique designs and motifs and their work often took the form of the miniature totem poles we see today. The sculptors illustrated their legends and myths through representation of animals and birds such as bear, frog, killer whale, and salmon.

It was fascinating to watch Rufus carve. He would select a chunk of argillite and begin by carefully examining it for cracks. Once satisfied the piece was solid, he would saw off a portion the size he wanted to make a totem pole. These would vary from four inches square to 20 inches in length. (Recently he made an exceptionally large pole, 50 inches high, which is in the Parliament Buildings at Ottawa.)

The pole was measured off in sections—each one representing a different symbol. Rufus would carve the bottom figure first and complete each section before moving to the next. A 12-inch pole may contain three or four large figures depicting an Indian legend.

The tools used by Rufus consisted of an assortment of knives, hacksaw blades and steel files. He said that his father and the other old-time carvers used primitive tools and did not take too kindly to anyone using hacksaw blades. But even by this comparatively modern method, Rufus still took several days to carve a 12-inch pole.

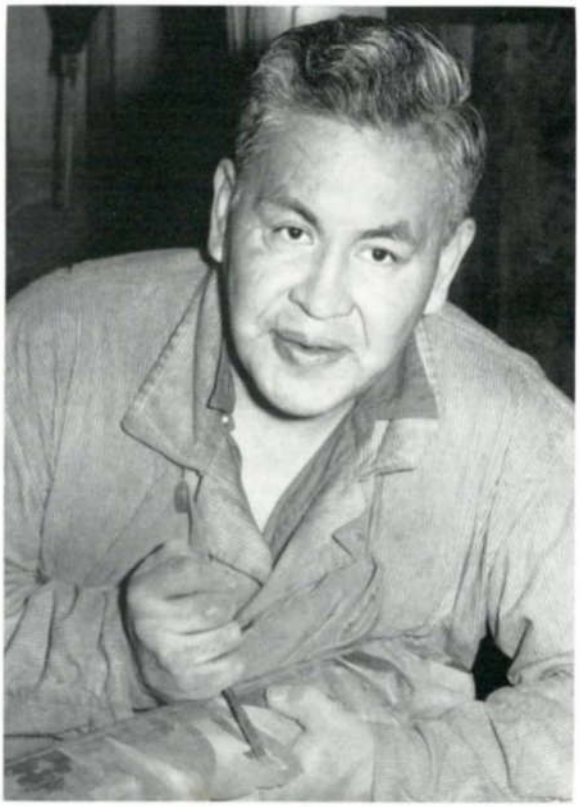
Carving argillite is slow, tedious work and not many Haidas today are interested in carrying on the tradition. The prosperous industrial climate now experienced on the Islands has helped to bring about this situation as most of them are earning good wages on a year-round basis at logging and fishing.

There are other well known Haida carvers from the Charlotte Islands, but few of these men are alive today; there is Arthur Moody aged 82, Rufus's father, and Robert Davidson, 88 years old, both of whom have carving exhibits in many countries. Both men passed on the art to their sons, and in the case of the Davidson family, Claude Davidson has in turn passed his knowledge on to his son Robert Davidson who has made some fine carvings, and is currently studying in Vancouver. Because of the increased demand for Haida craft, Rufus has started classes with the youngsters in Skidegate Mission and it is hoped the new generation will produce some gifted carvers like their teacher.

Stories have circulated on how argillite is mined, also how it is carved. One tells that it is mined from a secret location and that the source is only passed on at the time of death. I was told that it was carved under water with special blunt instruments handed down from father to son. Both, of course, are not true.

Raw slate dries out and cracks if exposed to the sun and so it is usually stored in a damp place under a building or in a cellar. However, slate that has been carved is smooth and polished and will not crack. A geologist informed me that argillite has been found in different parts of British Columbia, but only the slate from the Queen Charlotte Islands is suitable for carving.

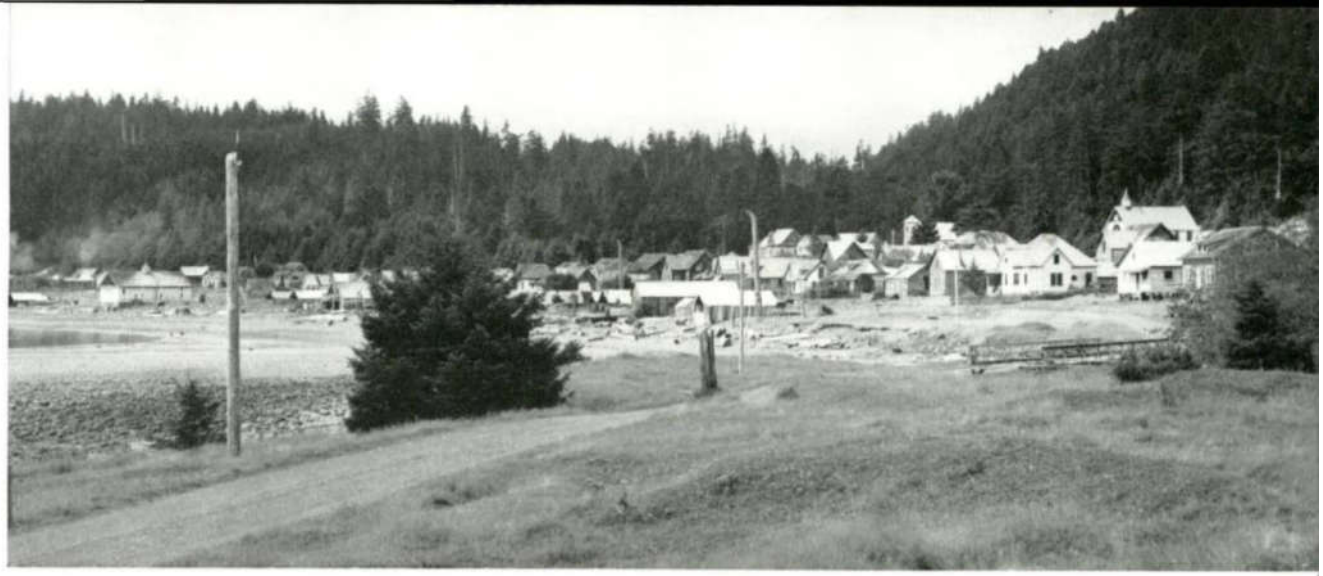
The area on Slatechuck Mountain where the argillite is quarried is the property of the Haidas, though it was only in 1941 that by order-in-council it was officially designated Reserve No. 11 "Black Slate" and their exclusive rights confirmed. The Skidegate Band Council exercises strict control over the quarrying and carvers must obtain a permit to go into the area.



Rufus Moody of Skidegate Mission whose artistry in argillite is famous.

After I had been stationed there nearly two years, Rufus Moody invited me to help him bring out a supply of the slate. He said I would be the first white person to make the trip and that he had obtained the necessary permission from the Skidegate Mission Council.

When the chosen day arrived, Rufus and I, together with Dempsey Collinson, a member of the Skidegate



Indian Council, and Cst. Fred Simpson left the police detachment at 5 a.m. The first leg of our journey was by fish boat part way through the Skidegate Channel. By daylight, we had arrived at a small secluded bay and the fish boat was safely anchored off shore.

We used a small skiff to get our gear to shore where we sorted out what we would carry to the quarry. We all wore rubber hip boots and carried packboards strapped to our backs. It was raining and blowing—not at all favourable for our little hike.

With Rufus in the lead, we headed inland along a valley floor topped by heavy forest—the same route the Indians had travelled for generations. The trail terminated at a narrow winding river that coursed its way along the valley bottom. The frigid clear water of this fast-flowing river was three feet deep and about 20 feet across. The heavy growth of timber and underbrush made it impossible to walk anywhere but along the river edge and this was the reason for the hip boots. We followed it for four miles. We had to cross over many times along the way and this was no easy task among the slippery rocks which caused me one fall into the stream.

The next part of our trip was to climb part-way up Slatechuck Mountain. Once again the going was difficult in heavy virgin timber which was thick enough to completely blot out the sky. The place was honeycombed with deer trails and it would have been easy to lose the way.

It was noon before we reached our destination—a steep sidehill of tall timber with diggings of argillite exposed over a 200-yard area. Rufus took us directly to a small ledge and showed us where to start digging. We all took a turn at a hole about three feet deep and five feet square, but were continually hampered by rock and clay falling from the ledge above. We finally exposed the top of a large argillite boulder.

Rufus said he had been taking slate from the top of this boulder for years because it was of excellent quality.

The expedition to collect argillite began at Skidegate Mission (top) and proceeded along Skidegate Inlet in this fishing boat one rainy morning.

The hole where his particular black slate is found is uncovered by Rufus Moody.

At the quarry on Slatechuck Mountain Corporal Hobson is digging while Mr Moody tests the quality of the pieces of argillite.

His packboard laden with argillite, Rufus Moody crosses a stream on the way out through the forest.

R. W. HOBSON PHOTOS

When we had cleaned the top away, he set to work cracking off a five-inch slab with wedges and hammers he had carried in. By rigging a small rope block and tackle to a tree above the hole and using pry poles, we managed to stand the heavy slab on its end. In this position we were able to saw it into small pieces with an ordinary handsaw. Sawing slate can be compared to sawing a block of hardwood with a dull hacksaw. The sawing and packing of the slate took us the better part of the afternoon.

I was amazed at the weight of this slate. A piece about 12 inches square weighed between 60 and 70 pounds. As we cut it up, Rufus chipped away the visible cracks with a small hand-axe and covered the ends with shellac. Unless properly treated, it would crack and eventually crumble into small pieces once taken from the ground, he said.

We packed about 400 pounds into our packboards, leaving the tools carefully concealed in the bush. Rufus also camouflaged the hole, explaining that while there appeared to be a large quantity, only a small portion was suitable for carving.

It took nearly twice as long to make the trip out with the added weight of the argillite. We had to slide part way down the mountain, and the river—that's another story. Needless to say, we were a sorry mess when we reached the beach. More than once on the struggle out Rufus remarked that he was not charging enough for his carvings, and the more tired he became, the more he threatened to increase the price.

By way of interest, we had each packload weighed, and much to our surprise we learnt that Rufus and I each carried 94 pounds, Constable Simpson had 87 and Dempsey Collinson's weighed in at 140 pounds! (Incidentally, this Councillor is now a member of the Queen Charlotte RCMP Auxiliary force—a good man to have around on a busy Saturday night.)

After two days of rest, Rufus was back carving again and, happily, the prices did not go up. The two policemen took a while longer to recuperate.

It was several months later that Rufus asked if I would consider going with him on another trip, but to this I politely refused, explaining that I had other commitments. ◆

SOME ARGILLITE CARVINGS IN THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY COLLECTION

Front and back view, shaman and three figures. c. 9" high.

The berry picker and the grizzlies, who kidnapped the young woman and took her to live with them. A fine piece by Charlie Edensaw, professional Haida carver born in 1839 who died at the age of 85.

JIM ATKINSON PHOTOS

The pipe-head (8¼" long) collected by Halkett in 1822. These elaborate pipes were ornamental rather than practical though a bowl is hollowed in the thick end and a stem could be inserted at narrow end.

IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

BY RICHARD J. D. BRUNT

THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT that the white man was responsible for their extinction, as he was for extinguishing the carrier pigeon and the hordes of bison from the plains. But this time he did it without ever pointing a gun or firing a shot; his presence and his goods were sufficient to bring about the disappearance from the North American scene of an entire species until today all that is left of the mysterious wool dog of the Coast Salish Indians is a few square yards of woolly material and a single painting.

If you look at a map of Northwest America you will find, almost on the 49th parallel of latitude, a great Strait debouching into the Pacific Ocean. This is the Strait of Juan de Fuca which leads into the incredibly beautiful waterways of Puget Sound, to the south, and to the Strait of Georgia which separates Vancouver Island from the mainland of British Columbia, to the north. In this relatively small area, only some three hundred miles long by 150 miles wide, lived a people who had not only come to terms with their environment but had made it produce an abundant living. From the sea came an endless supply of food as nourishing as it was varied. From the rain forest came the giant cedars from which they built their sea-going canoes and wove (from its fibrous inner bark and roots) everything from fishing nets to cooking pots—even clothing. But the ingenuity of these people knew no bounds and in their cedar-planked long houses the women of the tribes turned to loom weaving, using for their wool the fine hairs of the mountain goat mixed sometimes with fireweed fluff or soft feathers.

Then, out of nowhere it seemed, there came a supply of wool even finer, even thicker; a wool shorn from the backs and flanks of a strange breed of dog; a breed of completely unknown origin; a breed probably extinct this past one hundred years; a breed of which even the Indian name has been forgotten.

Why, among all the peoples of the Northwest Coast, was it only among the Coast Salish that the strange wool dogs were found? Captain James Cook, who stayed at Nootka Sound in the spring of 1778, commented that "hogs, dogs and goats have not as yet found their way to this place" while Juan Perez, who preceded him by four years, made much the same observation.

It is to Captain George Vancouver that we are indebted for the earliest eye-witness account of these dogs. While anchored near Restoration Point (about half way down Puget Sound) in May of 1792 he noted, "the dogs belonging to this tribe of Indians were numerous, and much resembled those of Pomerania, though in general somewhat larger. They were all shorn as close to the skin as sheep are in England; and so compact were their fleeces, that large portions could be lifted up by a corner without causing any separation. They were composed of a mixture of a coarse kind of wool, with very fine long hair, capable of being spun into yarn. This gave me reason to believe that their woollen clothing might in part be composed of this material. . . ."

Later, at Milbanke Sound, farther north, Vancouver remarked that not one person was seen clad in a woollen mantle such as had been so plentiful in "New Georgia" (the region of the Coast Salish), which again seems to indicate that the dogs were indigenous only to a very small area of the Northwest Coast.

While Captain Vancouver was exploring the coast (in June of 1792) two Spanish vessels, *Sutil* and *Mexicana* (Captains Galiano and Valdez), entered the Gulf of Georgia and anchored off the northern end of Gabriola Island near the present city of Nanaimo, where they found that "the indians also offered new blankets which we afterwards concluded were of dog's hair, partly because when the woven hair was compared with that of

The shorn dog is a detail from Paul Kane's painting of Clal-lum (Coast Salish) women weaving, reproduced courtesy Royal Ontario Museum, University of Toronto.

those animals there was no apparent difference, and partly from the great number of dogs they keep in those villages, most of them being shorn. These animals are of moderate size, resembling those of English breed, with very thick coats, and usually white; among other things they differ from those of Europe in their manner of barking, which is simply a miserable howl."

John Jewitt, armourer in a Boston trading ship, who was a captive at Nootka between 1803 and 1805 remarked that the natives had "a kind of grey cloth made of the hair of some animal which they procure from the tribes to the South". Dr Robert Brown, who edited the 1896 edition of Jewitt's *Narrative*, added that "a tribe on the Fraser River used to keep flocks of these curs which they periodically clipped like sheep."

Simon Fraser, descending the great river which still bears his name, met (in 1808) the Coast Salish near Agassiz and wrote: "This nation . . . have rugs made from the wool of *Aspai* or wild goat and from dogs hair, which are as good as the wool rugs found in Canada. We observed that the dogs were lately shorn." And, "They make, with dogs hair, rugs with stripes of different colours, crossing at right angles and resembling at a distance, Highland plaid."

Seventeen years later Dr John Scouler, the surgeon of the Hudson's Bay Company's vessel *William and Anne* remarked that "the natives of Tatooch [in Juan de Fuca Strait] show much ingenuity in manufacturing blankets from the hair of their dogs. On a little island a few miles from the coast they have a great number of white dogs which they feed regularly every day. From the wool of their dogs and the fibres of the Cypress they make a very strong blanket. They have also some method of making red and blue stripes in their blankets in imitation of European ones."

By 1825 then, only fifty years after the first explorers plied these waters in their tiny ships, the Indians, though their blanket designs had been original, were already imitating products of European manufacture and the wool dogs were well on their way to obsolescence; indeed only twenty-one years later the naturalist Berthold Seemann (in H.M. surveying vessel *Herald*) wrote that "since the Hudson's Bay Company have established themselves in this neighborhood, English blankets have been so much in request that the dog's hair manufacture has been rather at a discount, eight or ten blankets being given for one sea-otter skin."

Fortunately for posterity Paul Kane, an artist who accompanied the Hudson's Bay Company brigade from Fort William on Lake Superior, arrived at Fort Victoria in 1847 and sketched one of these dogs which can be seen (looking decidedly sheep-like!) in his painting "Clal-lum Women Weaving a Blanket" which is now in the Royal Ontario Museum.

Kane says, "The men wear no clothing in summer, and nothing but a blanket in winter, made either of dog's hair alone, or dog's hair and goosedown mixed, frayed cedar-bark, or wildgoose skin. . . . They have a peculiar breed of small dogs with long hair of a brownish black and a clear white. These dogs are bred for clothing purposes. The hair is cut off with a knife and mixed with goosedown and a little white earth, with a view of curing the feathers. This is then beaten together with sticks, and twisted into threads by rubbing it down the thigh with the palm of the hand, . . . after which it undergoes a second twisting on a distaff to increase its firmness. The cedar bark is frayed and twisted into thread in a similar manner. These threads are then woven into blankets by a very simple loom of their own contrivance."

By the time of the Fraser River gold rush of 1858 the Indians had all but lost the art of weaving and the wool dog had become almost extinct. Mr Jonathan Miller, the first postmaster of the city of Vancouver, B.C., stated that soon after his arrival in 1862 he was present at a potlatch in the vicinity, and that during the ceremonies he saw a native conjurer devour, or pretend to devour, alive, a small white long-haired dog of a species that he had never before seen amongst the natives.

From Juan Perez, mariner, to Jonathan Miller, postmaster, was only eighty-eight years but in that one life's-span the little white dogs of the Coast Salish apparently became extinct. Some were undoubtedly abandoned on their islets to starve and others probably found their way into the village cooking-pots as the advent of English trade-goods made the wool dog obsolete.

But still there remains the question, "where did they come from originally?" At least one writer, recalling the "miserable howling" of these dogs, has attempted to link them with the more-or-less voiceless dogs of Kamchatka, advancing the theory that junks from the Orient had been wrecked on this coast (as indeed happened in 1834 when a Japanese junk went aground in the Strait of Juan de Fuca). This theory was supported by Mr J. K. Lord, the naturalist attached to the British North American Boundary Commission, who said, "I have been informed by a friend who has been there that the Japanese have a small long-haired dog, usually white, and from description very analogous to the dog that was shorn by the Indians of the coast and of Vancouver Island".

The little dogs are gone now, unnamed and almost forgotten, and the Stalo people (as the Salish of the Fraser River call themselves) experiment with home-made looms attempting to recapture a lost art, a little something of the old days gone now, like the dogs, forever. ◆

BLOW GUN

BY JEROME J. KNAP

BLOWGUNS are usually associated with aborigines of South and Central America or Southeast Asia. Their poison tipped darts were formidable weapons for warfare and hunting. However blowguns were also used in hunting small game by the Iroquois.

Many ethnologists believe that blowguns were originated separately in Southeast Asia and in South or Central America where they were used in prehistoric times. But in eastern North America the use of blowguns seems to be much more recent.

It is a matter of conjecture just how the Iroquois learnt of the blowgun. Iroquoian tribes ranged over a wide area, as far south as the Carolinas. It is remotely possible that they learnt of the blowgun from the Cherokees who in turn may have learnt of its efficiency from the Indian tribes round the Gulf of Mexico. There is no record of a poisoned dart being used in the north.

Detailed information on the Iroquois blowguns is rare. Lewis Morgan in his *League of the Iroquois* gives only a very brief description of the weapon. He states that it was approximately six feet in length, one inch in diameter and about a half-inch bore. The darts were about two and a half feet long. These dimensions are congruent with the few remaining Iroquois blowguns and darts at the National Museum in Ottawa where specimens vary in length from three feet seven and one-half inches with approximately three-eighths inch bore to five feet two inches with one-half inch bore, and the New York State Museum in Albany. The wood of these blowguns seems to be alder. The wooden darts vary in length proportionately and the gasket material bound to the end of the shaft was fluff such as thistle-down or milkweed seed. Morgan gives the name *ga-go-an-da* for the blowgun and *ga-no* for the dart.

A much more interesting description of the weapon and its use comes from Isaac Weld, a youthful Irish traveller and geographical writer. Weld toured United States and Canada from 1795 to 1797. By that time the Iroquois, allies of the British, were no longer a proud and powerful nation, having been ravaged by the American Revolution and resettled on reservations in southern Ontario and upper New York State.

In spite of his youthful twenty-one years, Weld was a careful observer. He described Indians "factory making" birch-bark canoes in Quebec. And near Kingston, Ontario, he dined on venison, and steaks from a fifteen-pound Atlantic salmon speared by torchlight. He reported on the activities of the commercial fishermen, market hunters, and on the vast quantity of wild life to be seen, particularly passenger pigeons, squirrels, and bears.

After having spent several days at Niagara Falls, Weld planned to sail west to Detroit. But contrary winds prevented his ship from sailing. Having nothing to do young Weld frequently fell in with parties of Seneca Indians hunting squirrels about which he leaves us this account: "They shot them principally with bows and arrows and blowguns, at the use of which last the Senekas are wonderfully expert. The blowgun is a narrow tube commonly about six feet in length, made of a cane reed or of some pithy wood through which they drive short slender arrows by the force of their breath. The arrows are not much thicker than the lower string of a violin; they are headed generally with little triangular bits of tin, and around the opposite ends, for the length of two inches, a quantity of the down of thistles or something very like it, is bound so as to leave the arrows at this part of such thickness that may but barely pass into the tube. The arrows are put in at the end of the tube that is held next to the mouth, the down catches the breath and with a smart puff they will fly to a distance of fifty yards."

The blowgun is a weapon of optimum efficiency for small game hunting. The spear or javelin lacks range and accuracy while with a bow there is a great arrow loss when the archer shoots after small game into trees. On the other hand the blowgun is amazingly accurate in calm air and because the darts are easily made their loss is not important. Weld talks about this accuracy of the blowgun: "I have followed young Seneka Indians, whilst shooting with blowguns for hours together, during which time I have never known them to miss their aim, at the distance of ten to fifteen yards, although they shot at the little red squirrels, which are not half the size of rats, and with such wonderful force they used to blow forth the arrows, that they frequently drove them up to the very thistle down through the heads of the largest black squirrels. The effect of these guns at first appears like magic. The tube is put to the mouth and in the twinkling of the eye you see the squirrel that is aimed at fall lifeless to the ground, no report, not the smallest noise even is heard nor is it possible to see the arrow so quickly does it fly, until it appears fastened to the body."

The accuracy of these Iroquois blowgunners may seem exaggerated, but there is no reason to doubt it. The Indians of Amazon jungles have been known to kill flying birds or monkeys leaping from tree to tree with their blowguns and poisoned darts. And aiming with a blowgun, which shoots straight, is not so difficult as it looks. •

NORTHERN BOOKS

THE ARCTIC FRONTIER

Ed. by R. St. J. Macdonald, University of Toronto Press, 1966, 311 pages. $7.50.

Reviewed by N. L Nicholson

In his foreword the Director General of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs (which with the Arctic Institute of North America sponsored the volume) points out that this book is not about the Canadian North but "about the Arctic community of which we [Canada] are one of the major members, along with the Soviet Union," the United States, Denmark, Iceland, and Norway. It is therefore rather unfortunate that the title does not reflect this. Instead the title tends to conjure up some of the very traditional concepts that the several contributors to the volume strive so hard to destroy. Certainly the authors do not confine their attention to the Arctic for they also deal with the sub-Arctic and with some areas, such as southeastern Alaska, which are neither. Nor is the "frontier" concept explored although it is referred to occasionally as when Michael Marsden talks of "the true frontiers of settlement" (without, however, explaining what is meant by this). On the other hand, some time worn concepts are included and are presented as though they are new; for example, the idea of the Arctic Ocean as a Mediterranean sea. This idea, it is claimed, comes as a shock to "about all of us". Some of the readers may be shocked that it is a shock to some of those involved in the preparation of this volume! However, it may be true that "it is still difficult to impress upon the public and industry at large that the most essential quality of the Arctic is . . . a central position in the world community." If so, the appearance of this volume should reduce the difficulty. It would have been reduced still more however if there had been an index to its contents and perhaps a few more maps.

The publishers rightly claim that the book "deflates as well as inflates" the surpassing importance of the Arctic. Some of the authors certainly make no attempt to disguise the fact that Canada, like all countries, has feet of clay with respect to many of its policies. The chapter on 'America's Eskimos—Pawns of History' by that wise old veteran of Arctic activity, Diamond Jenness, is a case in point. Others have produced a genuine confrontation with current issues as with Michael Marsden's analysis of the implications of recent technological developments on transportation. Gordon Smith's contribution on sovereignty in the north brings up-to-date earlier summaries of this situation especially with regard to the polar continental shelf and the waters of the Canadian arctic archipelago. He also properly regards it as the Canadian aspect of an international problem. George Rogers continues the theme with 'The International Implications of Arctic Exploitation' and Neil Field and Terence Armstrong contribute useful chapters on the USSR. There is little in the material presented that is new to the student of geography or Canadian affairs. But to those whose recent interests have been with the international affairs of the South China Sea or tropical Africa this book may come as a refreshing and cooling shower.

Professor Nicholson, former head of the Geographical Branch, is assistant dean of graduate studies at the University of Western Ontario.

THE VOYAGEURS AND THEIR SONGS

Long-play record (33⅓ rpm) and booklet, Minnesota Historical Society, St Paul, Minn., 55101, USA. Order direct: mono $5.62 or stereo $6.70, Canadian.

This is an attractive album with cover drawing taken from a painting by Frances Hopkins. Within, besides the record, is a map (on which two spelling errors are unfortunate) showing the long waterways from Lachine on the St Lawrence to far-off Lake Athabasca in the northwest, an illustrated booklet by Dr Theodore C. Blegen, the Minnesota historian, and the words of the songs.

Dr Blegen in a brief and lively account gives an insight into the life of the voyageur whose vocation called for more than stamina, courage, and the ability to paddle a canoe for fourteen hours a day. He had also to be able to repair or even make his birch-bark vessel, build a house in the wilderness, handle a dog-team, and perhaps hunt for provisions. He was in fact the sinews of a trade in furs that spanned a continent, east to west, and from the subarctic to the lower Mississippi. He was the nameless one who made possible some of the famous explorations. The contribution of the Indians to the success of the French voyageur is not forgotten by Dr Blegen, for it was the adoption of their mode of travel, preservation of food, knowledge of country and animals, that made the extension of the fur trade possible and profitable. Dr Blegen completes the picture with a description of the voyageurs' canoes, their food, the goods they carried, the highlights of their life. It is in many ways a pity that their songs were not more descriptive of their own activities.

One might expect songs of the voyageurs to be vigorous, even martial, but even the working songs tended to be reminiscent and softly melodious, so long as the rhythm for the stroke of a paddle was good, as in the old French melody "En Roulant ma Boule". The voyageurs were a romantic group—tough, adventurous, lured by the pays d'en haut, the remote country, spending long months away from home. That their thoughts turned to home and families is evidenced in the songs, mostly of old French origin. There were undoubtedly other songs of more bawdy type, and perhaps other words to familiar tunes, but they are not included here and in fact not many are known to have survived.

The twelve chansons here are beautifully rendered by the male choir of the University of Moncton, N.B., under the direction of Father Neil Michaud. One feels that in places the songs could have been attacked a little more lustily, less smoothly, in keeping with working tunes, but the harmonious voices and excellent diction are a delight.—*M.B.*

CANADA: AN OUTLINE HISTORY

By J. A. Lower, Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1966. 225 pages, paperbound, maps by Robert Kunz, C.C.J. Bond, and Marion Paton. $2.75.

Reviewed by John A. Bovey

Another general history of Canada? Yes. And this compact paperback appears to be one of the best of its

kind now in print. It is what it announces itself to be, an "outline" history, and if there is any major criticism of the work, it follows inevitably from the limitations of any history of this type. A tendency to oversimplification simply cannot be avoided if one attempts to cover all the ground between the voyages of Lief Eiriksson and the celebration of the centenary of Confederation in less than 225 pages of text. But allowing for this inevitable limitation, Mr Lower's book appears to be admirably successful. It is smartly designed, printed in legible type, and easy to handle and to read. The written word is splendidly supported by those buttresses that publishers can, but too seldom do provide in such generous measure in paperbacks; maps, tables, charts, graphs and an index.

In fact perhaps the most notable feature of *Canada: An Outline History* is the wealth of maps the book contains—36 of them, outstanding for their quality, and well integrated with the text, which they illuminate on such diverse subjects as explorations, fur-trade routes, defence, political boundaries, population distribution, the development of transportation, and the fields of action on the European continent in which the Canadian armed forces served. It is not too much to say that the maps alone are worth the price of the book.

A concluding Appendix comprising 14 charts and tables ranges in subject matter from a list of the Governors of Canada from Champlain to General Vanier to graphs indicating the sources of foreign investment in the country up to 1961. Finally a detailed index provides a most useful aid to a book containing such a concentration of factual information.

There are, however, a few errors in that factual information. Cumberland House, founded in 1774, was not the first inland trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company; that honour falls to Henley House established inland from Albany in the year 1743. In a discussion of the notorious Pipe Line Debate of 1956 it is stated that the opposition was led by an aggressive new Conservative leader, John Diefenbaker. But it was the "old" leader, George Drew, who led the Official Opposition aggressively during that debate, and who damaged his health so irreparably in doing so that he had to retire later that year. And is it too much to say that "Ready, aye, Ready" was heard from the lips of French Canadians in 1914?

Presumably this book is intended for use in schools, for not only does it cover the whole span of Canadian history, but it also attaches "Problems" as well as brief, up-to-date bibliographies to the end of each of the fifteen chapters. It might be noted that many of the problems could not be discussed, let alone answered on the basis of the preceeding chapter alone. For example it would be difficult to say much on the question "What does the North contribute to Canada?" after reading the eight pages of Chapter I, "Canada: the Natural Background".

One question the book poses, and does not answer, and that is who is the author? Who is J. A. Lower? Not a clue, not one piece of biographical information do the publishers supply. The distinguished historian A. R. M. Lower, Professor Emeritus of Queen's University is not the author, although a first glance at the book's cover might suggest this to be the case. Evidently J. A. Lower is the vice-principal of a Vancouver high school, and he deserves fuller credit than he receives here.

But taken all-in-all, *Canada: An Outline History* is as good a book of its type as can be purchased. Even if intended for use in schools it would be an excellent acquisition for every Canadian household in this Centennial year. Its contents will inform some, refresh the memories of others, and act as well as a handy reference for the settling of arguments in the home, and the answering of centennial quizzes now proliferating on the mass media.

Mr Bovey, for a time archivist of the Northwest Territories, is now doing post-graduate study at the University of British Columbia.

THE MAMMALS OF EASTERN CANADA

By Randolph L. Peterson, Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1966. 465 pages, 8 colour plates, $15.95.

Reviewed by Robert W. Nero

For the person interested in studying mammals the most useful tool is an awareness of what is already known. This information often lies hidden in the "literature," that array of articles published in books, journals, and leaflets which is not always readily accessible. Hence the value of a new book on mammals may be partly assessed by its bibliography, and by the extent to which the author has weighed, sifted and brought together this accumulated data. Randolph L. Peterson's *The Mammals of Eastern Canada* rates high in this respect. Selected references are given for each species, there being, for example, 20 publications listed for the Little Brown Bat, works ranging from 1897 to 1960. All references are cited in full in the bibliography—I counted 864 citations, from which one may judge that the information presented in this book rests on a substantial foundation. This information includes data on specimens and records from the collections of 14 major institutions, in addition to the Royal Ontario Museum (where Dr Peterson is Curator of the Department of Mammalogy).

"Eastern Canada is considered in this study to include the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland (including Labrador), and the adjacent off-shore waters. The islands in James Bay and eastern Hudson Bay, politically a part of the Northwest Territories, are also included. The land area—approximately 1,215,590 square miles—extends about 1800 miles from east to west and 1400 miles from north to south."

Each of the 122 species covered by this book is dealt with in from one to four pages. Topics include: size, distribution and variation, habitat, habits and remarks. Considerable emphasis is given to conservation or management aspects. One can only hope that these logical statements will be widely read. The carefully prepared distribution maps include precise points of origin of known specimens and other records. Type localities, i.e. places where mammals of a form new to science were first obtained, are given on the maps and are listed in the table of contents. This term, and many others, is defined in a useful glossary of five pages. In all, 112 subspecies or geographic races (in addition to the 122 species) are included. Each is discussed at length and something is said about the significance of their distribution, though this latter aspect is unfortunately not shown on the maps.

Detailed line drawings of three views of the skull of each species and sometimes of additional forms will find a wide use. It was surprising to find the beaver skull shown in dimensions nearly one-half inch shorter than the deer mouse, and the arctic hare, more than three-quarters of an inch less. Presumably this resulted from space requirements or a desire to show details of certain skulls. Still, there is a good deal of available space

at the end of many sections, a half-page or more being left blank in order to keep the next major heading at the top of a new page. In view of the price of the book, perhaps some tightening would have been in order. In this connection, many of the line drawings of live mammals occupy too much space for their value. As a whole they are a great disappointment. One is tempted to make comparisons with other recent mammal books; suffice it to say that the several artists have sometimes done an injustice to their subjects. The colour plates add little to the book; Plate 8 would have made a good frontispiece (there is none), the remainder could have been omitted. In an age of superb nature photography one learns to expect faithful reproductions. Artists today, therefore, have to meet very critical eyes.

The chief value of this book lies in the large amount of good natural history and distribution information which is given for all species of mammals occurring within the large area of eastern Canada. The keys to identification of species and subspecies and discussions of the latter, coupled with recent distribution data, are useul.This book should be of benefit to anyone in eastern Canada or adjacent regions who wants to identify a mammal, its carcass or a skull, or who wants to know something of the occurrence and habits of any of these interesting animals.

Dr Nero is head of the division of natural history of the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, the building for which is now under construction.

THE ORDEAL OF JOHN GYLES

By Stuart Trueman, McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1966. 155 pages, $5.95.

Reviewed by Maurice Hodgson

John Gyles' journal is a moving and extremely readable account of eight years captivity with the Malecite Indians and the Acadians of New Brunswick. His journal is one of a distinguished American tradition initiated by John Smith's Virginia journal; a tradition which includes such notable Canadian captives as Radisson, John Tanner, and John Jewitt, each remarkable in his own right as individual and as author. Gyles' account, written at the insistence of his second wife in 1736, stands as a superlative description of individual endeavour to survive in a savage society in a strange and hostile land. Why, then, this book of Stuart Trueman's, which includes little of the original journal?

This book, at first glance, is deceiving. The title purports the book to be Gyles' original journal, yet only a very small portion of the journal is quoted and much of the book deals only incidently with Gyles. Chronologically, Trueman follows the 1736 journal commencing with the capture of the boy and his family in 1689, the separation of Gyles from his family, the torture, privation and, mercifully, the appearance of his Indian champion, O-ski-chin, the archetypal saviour necessary for the survival of any captive. After six years of slavery with the Malecites, Gyles is sold to a relatively prosperous Acadian, de Chauffours, where he is first slave and later himself saviour of de Chauffours' property when it is threatened by the New England scourge, Major Church.

In his account, Trueman manifests two purposes: a history of the Acadian-New England warfare using Gyles as a thin, unifying link; and to 'popularize' Gyles' adventures by using the journal when it suits him and writing a fictional account when it does not. Trueman can be commended, with reserve, for the first: one does have a clear perspective of Gyles historically; one sees Gyles' adventures *in toto*, not as an isolated adventure, but as a pathetic and nearly tragic event symbolizing all the personal tragedies which were played out against a background of futile wars of retribution. Trueman interprets for the reader the New Englander Gyles' unique position as Indian and French captive, and the insane American echo of the interminable European wars is made more clear. The other object is certainly less commendable. Gyles, always so vividly aware of himself in time and place, is more than capable of speaking for himself and he should be permitted to do so. A semi-fictional account of adventures like Gyles' is a travesty.

Trueman has the pleasing, fluid style of a good journalist; it is, perhaps, that style which almost seduces the reader into accepting his interpretation of the journal. The greater pity, then, that he did not use this ability to edit the journal, write a fresh introduction to place Gyles in historical perspective and then let Gyles speak for himself. A well-documented journal, with appendices, bibliography, and maps (there are none in this book) would have served a far more useful and necessary purpose than this unhappy union of history and fiction.

Mr Hodgson who is a lecturer at Selkirk College, B.C., has made a special study of the journals kept by captives of the Indians.

THE OTTAWA VALLEY AND THE FUR TRADERS

This story of early days in the Ottawa Valley, published in The Beaver, Spring 1966, is now available as a 20-page pamphlet, price 75 cents.

Order from

The Beaver, Hudson's Bay House
Winnipeg 1, Manitoba

THE GRIZZLY BEAR
Portraits from Life

Edited by Bessie Doak Haynes and Edgar Haynes. Illustrated by Mary Baker. 386 pages, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Okla. $5.00.

Reviewed by Clarence Tillenius

The grizzly bear is probably the grandest, the most intelligent, the most courageous and the most formidable game animal on the North American continent. The place that he holds—and has held—in the imagination of men has given rise to a vast collection of tales and stories in which the great bear figures. Beyond doubt the conviction most widely held about the grizzly is the belief in his ferocity and his tendency to attack, unprovoked. How true is this? In this book are given some valuable clues.

An anthology of grizzly stories would seem at first a difficult one to review, since it presents so many widely varying points of view. But in so controversial and complex an animal, there is no doubt that such an anthology comes closer to shedding light on the many facets of the grizzly's make-up than if written from one point of view only.

The 45 articles in this book cover nearly two centuries. One of the most interesting contributions comes from James Capen Adams (better known as Grizzly Adams) who was himself one of the most remarkable men who ever had to do with these bears. He raised and kept full grown grizzlies

as another man might keep dogs! One of the sights of San Francisco in the early 1800s was to see Adams walking through the city with his troupe of grizzlies padding along behind and beside him like so many huge, mannerly watch dogs.

Two other naturalists who studied and wrote of the grizzly were William H. Wright and Enos Mills. Their observations are mong the best we have. Here, too, is a moving chapter on the cubhood of Wahb from Ernest Thomson Seton's unforgettable *Biography of a Grizzly* and contrasted with it Frank C. Hibben's account of hunting down with hounds the "Fighting Silvertip of Albemarle".

The contradictory views of grizzly behaviour appear most often to be conditioned by the calling of his critics: ranchers, hunters and predator control men tending to regard him as a cunning, remorseless elk and cattle killer; naturalists and their like looking on him largely as a formidable but tolerant animal who is quite content to let others alone on condition he is left alone himself.

Several times in my own experience I have been surprised by the vindictive dislike of grizzlies evinced by many old prospectors and hunters who often declare—and carry out!—their intention of killing any d—— grizzly they come across. I suspect this may stem from the big bear's unfortunate habit in some localities of breaking into a man's cabin and completely destroying everything inside it. One or two such experiences (which might well be catastrophic for the man) may explain why they feel as they do. However that may be, I am sure anyone reading this anthology will acquire a greater understanding of, and sympathy for the grizzly than he may have had before. One thing becomes increasingly evident: the bear's own nature has gradually changed. Where once he roamed all over the open plains in all the arrogance of one who fears no other creature in the whole of his world, he has under man's relentless persecution, become shy and retiring, rarely showing himself by day. But still, cautious and watchful though he may have become, none but a fool would take liberties with a grizzly: enraged, he is still a terrible antagonist.

Happily more and more naturalists are striving by unprejudiced observation to put on record the real truths about this great animal: one of the last chapters in the book tells of Drs John and Frank Craighead and their experiments in keeping track of bears by radio, experiments which are already yielding new and hitherto unguessed information.

The pen and ink illustrations by Mary Baker are beautifully executed, just verging on being almost too neat and orderly. Surely a bolder, more rugged treatment would better convey the shaggy bulk, the sense of tremendous power that is so characteristic of this magnificent monarch of the mountains.

Mr Tillenius is an artist who makes his studies wherever his natural history subjects are to be found, be it the Arctic, the Rockies, the Prairies, or the backwoods. So he is necessarily also an expert "outdoorsman".

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THE WHOOPING CRANE

by Faith McNulty. Clarke Irwin, Toronto, 1966. 190 pages, illustrated, $5.95.

Reviewed by E. Otto Hohn

This book is a history of the campaign conducted over the last thirty years in the United States and Canada to preserve and increase the remnant population of wild whooping cranes and to breed some of them in captivity. The natural history of the crane is fairly briefly dealt with in the second to the ninth chapter and what we are told under this heading is a representation of material from R. P. Allen's research report "The Whooping Crane", 1952. The source of the natural history material is fully acknowledged, indeed Allen is evidently one of the author's heroes. The reader may, however, feel some disappointment at being told nothing new about the cranes themselves and he may come to share my impression that there is no obvious evidence here that the author has ever seen a whooping crane in the wild.

This does not impair the validity of her central topic, the crane conservation program, which is told in an interesting manner.

Effective protection of the whooping crane began in 1938 when the Aransas national wildlife refuge on the Texas coast was created. At that time fourteen whoopers were wintering there and this number has increased to forty-four by the end of 1965. As the breeding of these birds in Wood Buffalo Park, discovered in 1954, are safe from disturbance we can look to their future with guarded optimism. In connection with the breeding grounds one may object to the author's geography when she refers to them (on page seventeen) as being "in a far northern corner of Canada's Northwest Territories".

The main danger to the cranes is evidently still the shooting of occasional birds along their migration route. if this can be totally eliminated, the wintering ground refuge may eventually need to be enlarged. Its area is 47,000 acres but Allen's studies revealed that one pair of cranes needs a territory of about 400 acres.

A detailed account of the rearing of whooping cranes in captivity mainly at the New Orleans Zoo is given. The results of this have been only moderately satisfactory but we are told of a new breeding program shortly to be initiated at the Patuaxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland which will it is hoped lead to the liberation of the offspring of captives in the wild. The results of this operation will be awaited with interest.

Dr Hohn is associate professor in the Department of Physiology at the University of Alberta and an authority on northern birds.

WHOOPING CRANE Population dynamics on the nesting grounds, Wood Buffalo National Park, N.W.T.

By N. S. Novakowski. Canadian Wildlife Service Report Series No. 1. Queen's Printer, Ottawa, 1966, 20 pages, 50 cents.

This attractively produced, illustrated pamphlet will bring the reader up to date on the study that has been made of the whooping cranes by the Canadian Wildlife Service since 1954. The depressing conclusion drawn from the observations is that in spite of a reasonable number of young hatched, the adult population has increased only slightly. The survival of this splendid bird is problematical.

The next issue will be a special number on Eskimo art for which the single copy price will be $1.00.

Les Feux-Follets

This new national folk dance company was sponsored on its first tour of Western Canada, early in 1967, as one of the major Centennial undertakings of the Hudson's Bay Company. Apart from more than 20 public performances, the company made appearances in The Bay in six larger centres. The program presented by Les Feux-Follets—"The Canadian Mosaic"—was felt to be eminently suited to a Centennial promotion theme. It consists of ten suites, a sea-to-sea dramatization, through song, dance, setting and costume of the legends and customs of the first Canadians—Indians and Eskimos, the French and English, Scottish and Acadian settlers, and the European immigrants.

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